

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Teaching Fertility Awareness and its use to illiterate women

(A Guide for Village Women Leaders)

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Natural Family Planning Association of India
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Preface

This manual has been designed for grass-root level women leaders who are working for women's health and development in their villages. The manual is a guide to teach fertility awareness and the use of this awareness to women as an entry point to women's health and development.

Women's health—physical, mental and social is negatively effected by malnutrition, early marriage, frequent quick succession pregnancies, lack of trained assistance during labour and child-birth and heavy work and no lying in period after child birth.

A major cause of low resistance to disease, tiredness and poor health among women is maternal depletion, due to frequent quick succession pregnancies, breast-feeding and malnutrition. Women are having unwanted pregnancies, due to the non-availability of spacing methods within their reach. Another problem is spacing and limiting methods which have no negative effects on the physical health of women.

Therefore, one major component of women's health care and development is assisting women to avoid frequent quick succession pregnancy and reduce unwanted pregnancies.

Poor rural women are traditionally self reliant for health care and this compensates for the lack of and shortage of health centres and health professionals especially female.

Teaching fertility awareness and its use, as a method of family planning will cater to the need for a spacing method, with no side effects, which does not require going to a health centre or hospital and health professionals.

The goal is to teach poor women who have unplanned and unwanted pregnancies. These women are difficult to teach and reach because of lack of education, irresponsible reproductive behaviour of the husband, low intra-spouse communication and a low status in the family with little or no decision making powers.

The motive for reaching out to poor women, is to improve their physical and psychological (mental) health, to improve their bargaining power and to facilitate their development.

Fertility awareness education and its use, in avoiding or achieving a pregnancy is a natural method of family planning, which shows a woman her potential and instills in her self confidence. (Fertility awareness education is a means of empowering poor women). It gives them the potential to be self reliant in the regulation and control of their fertility, other than increasing the knowledge about their bodies.

For a woman to learn to identify her fertility and infertility (fertility awareness) requires the experiencing of the signs of fertility and infertility which is normally one month (one menstrual cycle).

The learning to use fertility awareness, as a means of natural family planning is phased over 2-3 months (2-3 menstrual cycles) for normal menstruating women.

Breast feeding women will require to experience only infertility to learn the method. For breast feeding and non-menstruating women, each learning phase lasts 1-2 weeks and therefore, the learning takes 1-2 months.

Intensive work and the action—research of the Indian Social Institute, with the active participation of 5,752 migrant women in the slums and villages around Delhi, has been used, to design the means of educating illiterate poor women, in understanding fertility awareness and its use in the regulation of their fertility. It was found, that the decision making powers of women, over their reproductive potential and sexuality, developed with the use of this fertility awareness and N.F.P innovation.

Little or no husbands co-operation and motivation was required for learning and use and use of the innovation gradually increased husband co-operation.

The instructors/animators found effective are mature married women, who are semi-literate and share the life experiences of poor illiterate women, living in slums and rural areas, i.e; the instructors/animators should be homophilous with the target audience.

Repetition was required at critical intervals and periods, to overcome the inability to read and the low power of comprehension of poor women.

Normally, there is a psychological need for women to share their learning experiences and problems and for support. With little or no husband co-operation, there is a greater need for support, from the instructor/animator or other women in a similar learning situation.

To cater to this need, for support and timely repetition, a system of house-visits at critical periods in the learning months was designed and pretested.

The pattern of house-visiting designed to reach, teach and support poor illiterate and semi-literate woman appears tedious but in practise is simple and effective.

Critical to learning this natural family planning innovation for poor illiterate women are:

Instructors or animators who can communicate with them in their own language and who share their experience and who can thus empathise with them.

Repetition of the message (instruction).

Support during the learning phase.

Women with high level of motivation and who have higher levels of education and with husband co-operation and support will not require frequent visits and support.

Action research, in 1,342 migrant women, has shown that continuity of use was found to be dependant on the 'support' of the animator i.e; house-visits at critical periods of the learning months. Experience has shown that where fertility awareness and N.F.P. is used as an entry point to reaching women, house-visiting on a one to one basis is ideal and effective.

At a later stage i.e; 6-12 months later, women feel free to come together and share experiences in a group. Although one to one teaching has been effective, group meetings can be effective if the women are already organised and can come together and have identical levels of comprehension and motivation.

Most women, initially, have inhibitions to share experiences and problems in a group. Even when women are already organised and can come together, group teaching has had problems because of differing levels of comprehension, motivation and needs.

Moreover, while older women have less inhibitions to share on sexuality related matters in a group, younger women shy away.

The fertility awareness innovation and N.F.P. referred to as **Prajanan Jagrooti, or the Modified Mucus Method** is a variant of the cervical mucus method of natural family planning.

The innovation and the means of reaching and teaching poor women, has been used in action research and service projects in India and Nepal and with modifications in Indonesia. The innovation and patterns of house-visiting are being tested in pilot projects in Africa—Sierra Leone, Liberia, Uganda, Ethiopia, Ghana, the Gambia, Kenya and Zambia.

K. Dorairaj

Introduction

The aim of the guide is

to assist village women leaders to reach out to poor illiterate women.

to teach women about their fertility and infertility.

to give women knowledge of their body functioning.

to teach poor and illiterate women to use fertility awareness as a means of family planning.

to use natural family planning as an entry point to women's health and development.

The content of this guide is presented in 3 parts.

Part I presents the basic fertility awareness education.

Part II presents “how to teach” the use of fertility awareness as a means of natural family planning, to normal menstruating women, who are illiterate or semi-illiterate and with low levels of husband motivation. The teaching, learning is in phases to be spread out over three months, referred to as “Learning Month I, II & III”.

The message in each phase (Learning Month) is brief and designed and presented according to:—

- 1. The needs of the women during learning. (In terms of their power of comprehension, retention and the knowledge required at the particular learning stage).**
- 2. The pattern of house-visits which in turn are based on the needs of women for learning and support.**

Part III covers the teaching of fertility awareness education for breast-feeding women who have not started menstruation. The message in this part is also in phases, according to the learning needs of illiterate women of low motivation.

Part I

Fertility Awareness Education

CHAPTER I

Awareness of Women's Health

The majority of poor women are illiterate and have a low status in the family as child bearers and rearers.

Women are married early, often soon after the first menstruation. At this stage, they are not fully grown into a woman. It will take 4-5 years for growth to be complete. Therefore, after the first menstruation the woman is not fully mature to get pregnant and have a child-birth.

Due to early marriage, after the first menstruation, women are exposed to pregnancy at a stage even before they are physically mature (fully grown) and ready physically for child-birth and breast feeding.

Due to early marriage and incomplete growth, women take time to conceive after marriage and are under stress to prove their fertility (power to have children) to the family and the community.

Miscarriages are also common for the first and second pregnancies, due to the young age of the women. These are unbearable (traumatic) experiences for teenage women.

The young age of the mother and her growing needs and that of the developing child and malnutrition during pregnancy result in premature babies (low birth weight babies) and insufficient breast milk.

Low birth weight babies with insufficient breast milk reduces the chance of the baby surviving (living).

Malnutrition in the mother also effects brain development of the child.

Malnutrition and frequent quick succession pregnancies cause “maternal depletion” (drying up of the mother’s health), resulting in tiredness, back-ache and poor health.

A number of pregnancies, child-births and breast feeding without proper nutrition and rest, leads to anaemia, backache, weakness and poor health.

Poor health can lead to diseases, including tuberculosis due, to lowered resistance.

Frequent child-birth, lack of trained assistance (trained dais, midwives and doctors) during child-birth and heavy work during pregnancy, and soon after child-birth results in the **pro-lapse** of the uterus.

Men want to have sex to satisfy themselves, but do not bear the consequences.

Often men want to have more children as they are not affected.

Women have unwanted, unplanned pregnancies only to cater to the husband's sexual needs.

Women have unwanted pregnancies due to the irresponsible sex behaviour of men. Women have to cater to the husband's sexual desires, to avoid the husband's displeasure and anger.

Women on the other hand have to bear the child, go through pregnancy without extra nutrition and rest.

They have to go through labour and child-birth.

Soon after child-birth they have no rest. They have to manage the house work, collect water and look after the children, the husband and the other family members

They breast-feed till they get pregnant again and often get pregnant without a menstruation, when the child can hardly walk.

Poor health can make a woman feel tired all the time, with no energy to look after her children and to groom herself.

Women are aware of the effects of frequent quick succession pregnancies on their health.

Women want to be more than child-bearers and rearers.

They want time for personal growth, leisure and non-formal education. They want to make decisions in the family.

Due to the stresses and strains of pregnancy and child-birth, breast-feeding and poor health, women lose their youth earlier than men and age fast.

Women need leisure and rest other than food and love.

Pregnancy, morning sickness, labour pains, child-birth and breast feeding are not a means of recreation for women.

CHAPTER 2

Awareness of Women Power

Women have a potential to do a lot for themselves and for other women.

Women should be equal partners with men even in a family.

Women can share in and make decisions on all family matters, but most often are not given a chance.

Women must start making decisions in the family especially in matters concerning them including in sexual matters.

Women have the power to reproduce—produce children and have sexual needs but women are not merely child bearers and rearers.

Husband and wife should jointly decide when to have a child and how many children to have.

The decision to have a child should be based on the woman's health, rest and leisure time and the costs of feeding and educating a child.

Women should decide when to have sex and whether they want to have another child or not (instead of having an unwanted pregnancy because the husband wants sex).

To regulate their fertility and to avoid pregnancies for health reasons women do not have to use methods of family planning which have side effects which effect their health.

Women have the power to regulate and control their fertility and the production of children to ensure spacing and better health for themselves and their children.

A woman can easily avoid a pregnancy if she knows when she cannot get pregnant, or when she can get pregnant.

CHAPTER 3

Female Reproductive Organs

The female reproductive organs are:

Two ovaries which produce the female eggs—one on the left side and one on the right side.

One uterus which is a small pear-shaped bag in which the baby grows for 9 months.

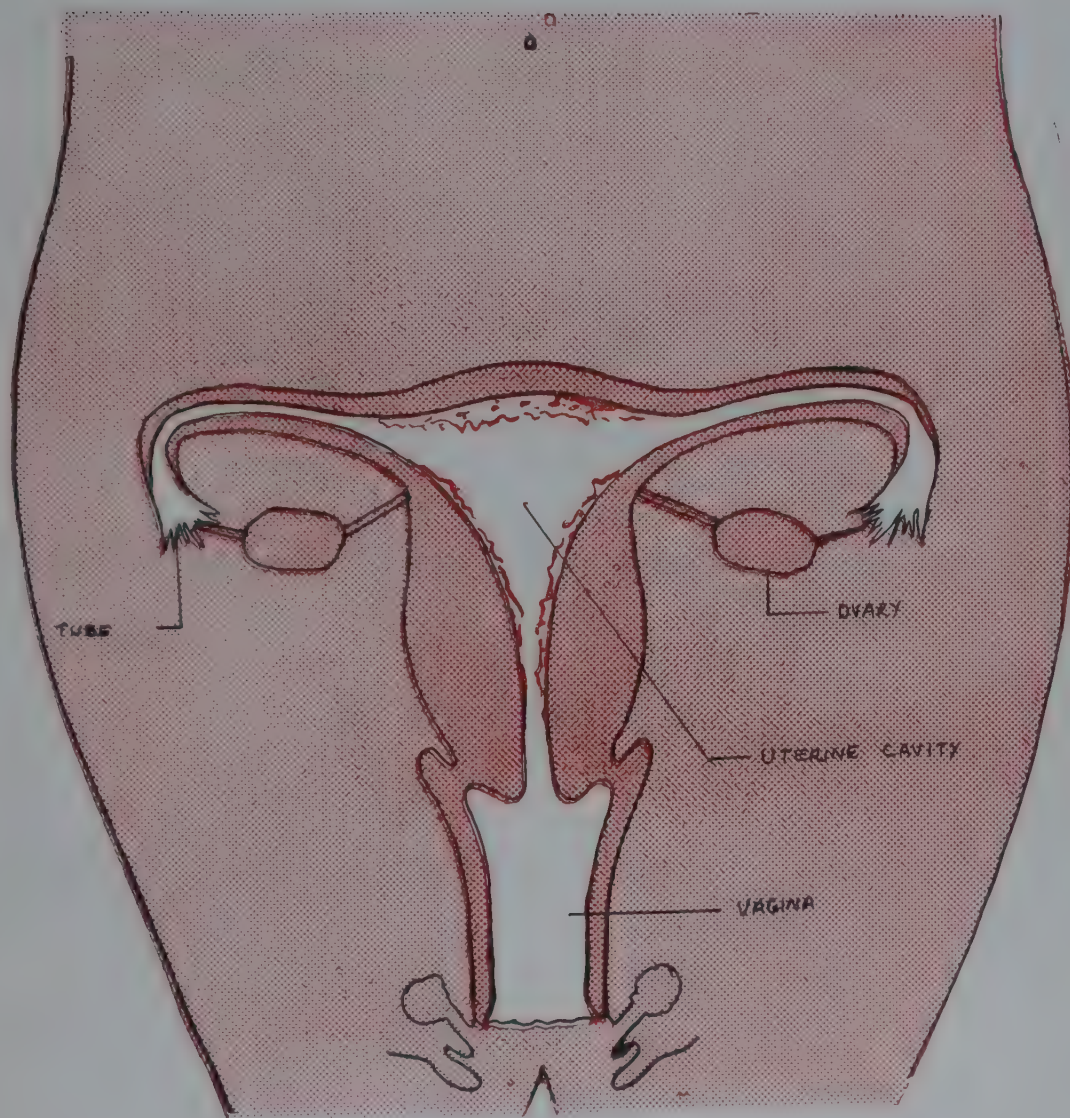
Two uterine tubes—one on the left side and one on the right side.
(Conception takes place in the tube).

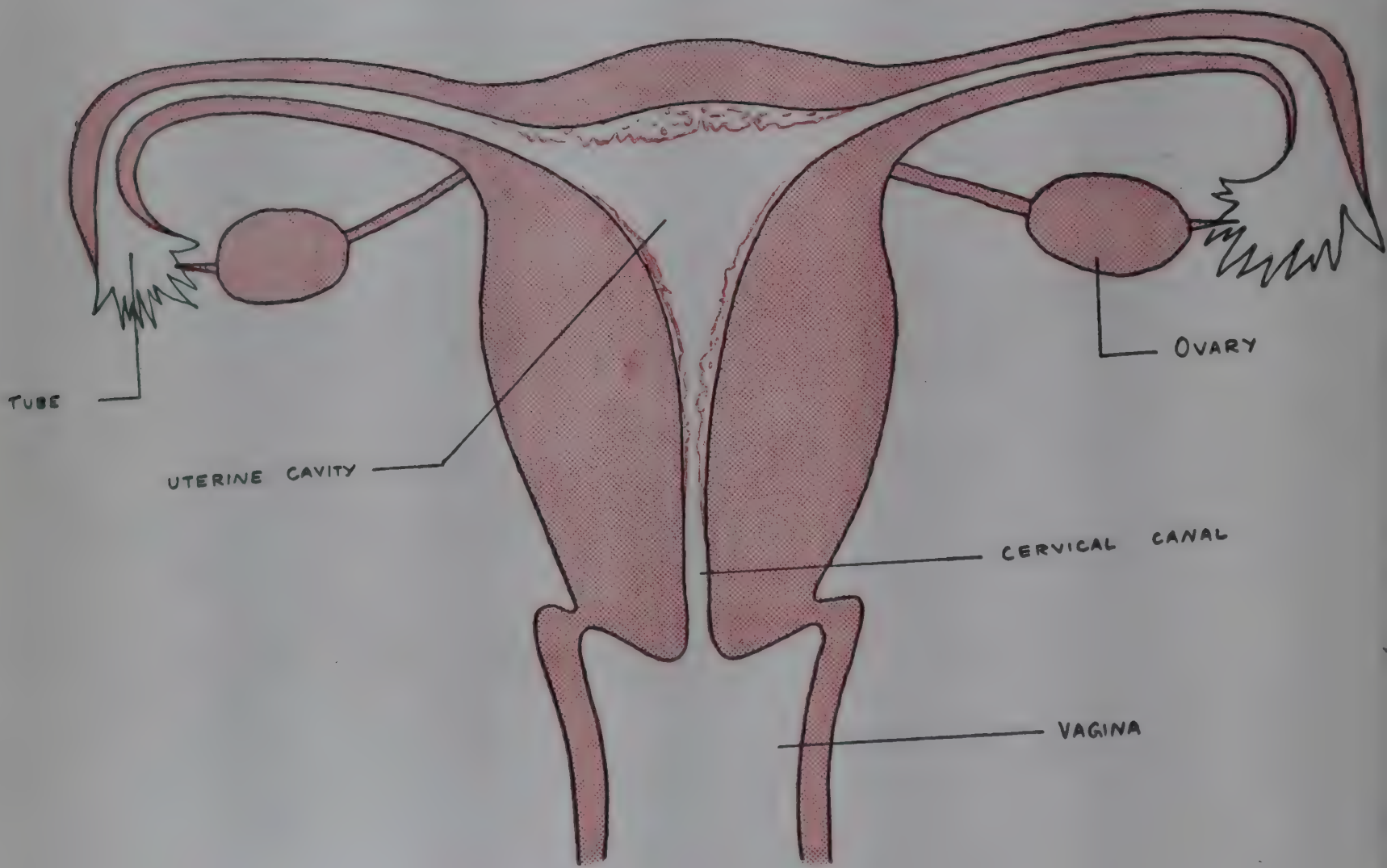
The neck of the uterus which produces a mucus discharge throughout the month.

The inner lining of the uterus which is torn and is shed each month, if a woman is not pregnant. (This causes bleeding every month which is called menstruation).

The birth canal is called the **vagina**.

The outer opening of the birth canal is the **vulva**.





Fertility Awareness

For a pregnancy to occur one male egg (Sperm) has to unite with one ripe female egg (Ovum).

There can be no pregnancy if there is no ripe female egg.

Male eggs are produced in a man continuously in the testis.

There are 2 kinds of male eggs—one kind produces a female child and the other a male child.

A girl or boy is born accordingly to the type of egg of the man which joins with the woman's egg. If the kind of egg that produces a female child joins with the woman's egg, a female child will be born. If the kind of egg that produces a male child joins with the woman's egg a male child will be born.

The sex of a child is dependent on the man's egg and not the woman's egg.

In a woman only one egg ripens in a month, on either the left or right ovary.

On each ovary are tiny un-ripe buds. In each bud lies an un-ripe egg. After a girl grows up, after the first menstruation, every month one bud will ripen on the right side or left side.

In the ripening bud, the egg also ripens. When the bud is ripe, the bud will burst and the ripe egg will be let out into the uterine tube.

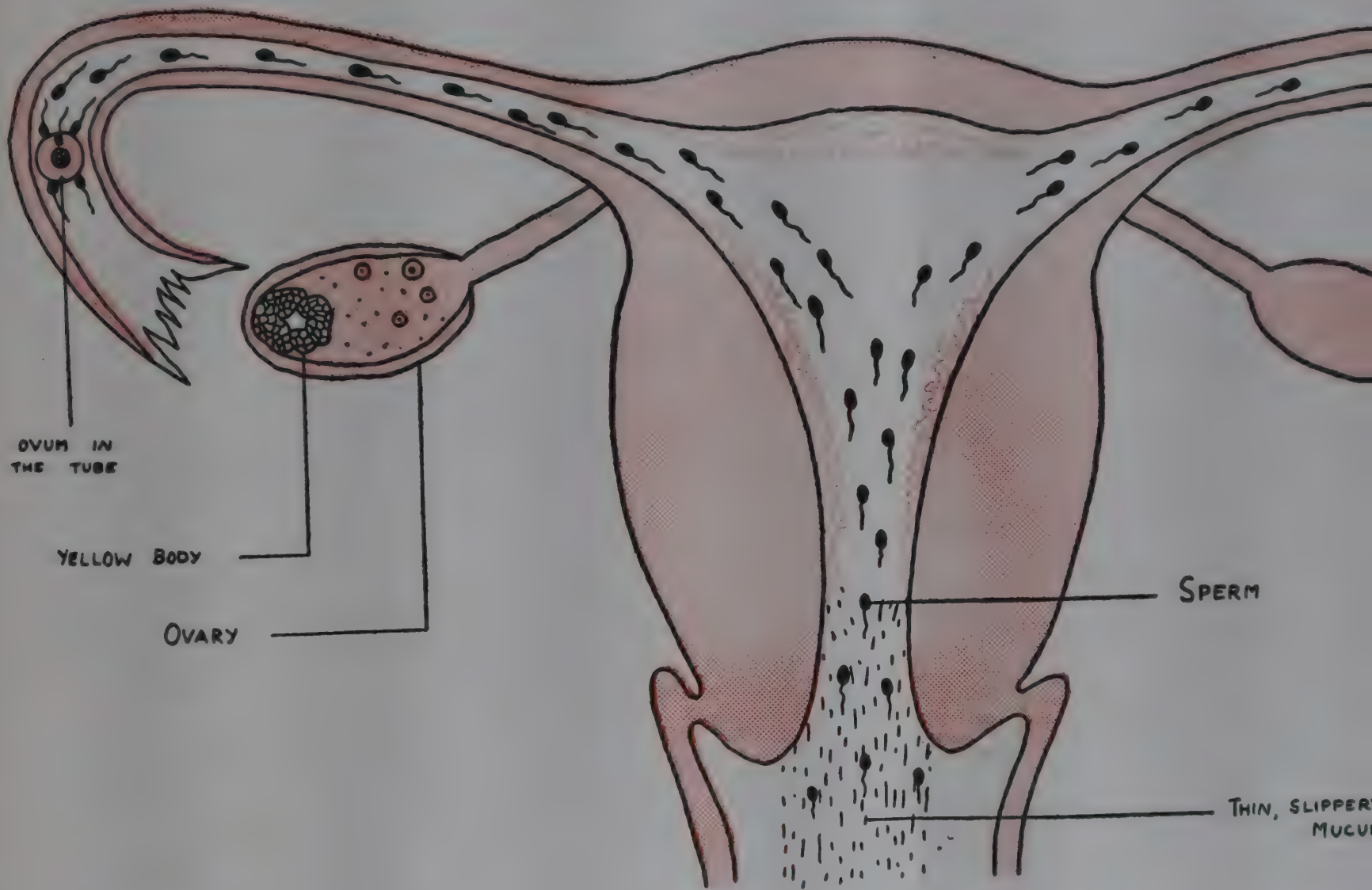
It is rare that 2 buds will ripen and that 2 ripe female eggs will be let out into the uterine tube.

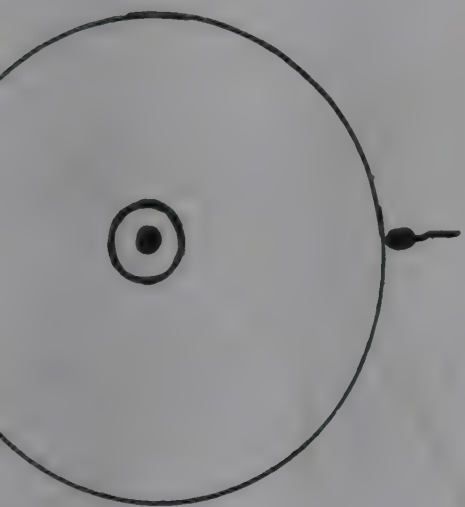
When a woman reaches 40 or 45 years, every month a bud may not ripen. Instead it may ripen every 2 months or 3 months, till menstruation stops completely.

If a woman wants to avoid a pregnancy she should have sex before the female egg ripens and after it dies.

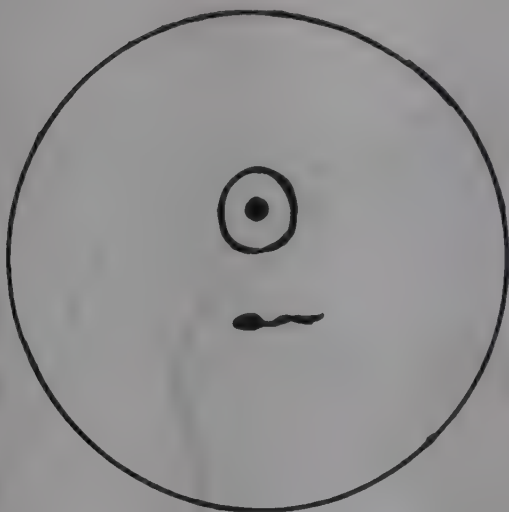
The female egg lives in the tube for only one day and then dies in the tube.

A woman can get pregnant only if she has sex on the days when her egg is ripe and is alive in the tube.





I



II



III



IV

If a woman has sex on the days before her egg ripens she cannot get pregnant.

If a woman has sex on the days after her egg dies she cannot get pregnant.

It is very easy for a woman to find out:

When the female egg is ripe.

When the bud bursts.

When the female egg is shed into the tube.

There are different ways of finding out when the female egg is ripe and let out.

One way is checking the mucus discharge at the vulva and from the feeling of the discharge.

When the female egg is ripe a woman will have a wet (lubricative and slippery) feeling at the vulva.

She will feel like some slippery, watery discharge is coming out.

If she checks this mucus it will be THIN, WATERY, COLORLESS OR CLOUDY AND SLIPPERY.

Like the white of a raw hen's egg, or like the slime when the vegetable ladies finger (ochre) is cut and dipped in water.

This type of mucus is also seen in cows and buffaloes.

Rarely it may also be thickish, whitish, or yellowish and curdy but then it will give a wet feeling.

When the wet lubricative feeling stops or the thin watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus stops, a woman knows that the ripe bud has burst and her egg is let out into the tube.

Therefore, after the wetness stops or the thin watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus stops, a woman can still get pregnant for one or two days.

Some women will feel a pain on the left or right side when the ripe bud bursts. This pain will last for 1/2 to 2 hours. Sometimes the pain is mild and can be missed.

To avoid a pregnancy a woman should avoid sex on the fertile days.

Fertile days in each cycle are:

The days of wetness (lubricative) feeling.

The days of thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus.

The two days and two nights after the wetness stops or the thin watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus stops.

The days when a woman cannot get pregnant are called the infertile days.

There are two infertile periods in one cycle.

The days after menstruation before the female egg ripens.

The days after the female egg dies in the tube, till the next menstruation.

Normal women have two types of mucus discharge :

INFERTILE MUCUS which comes when a woman cannot get pregnant on the infertile days.

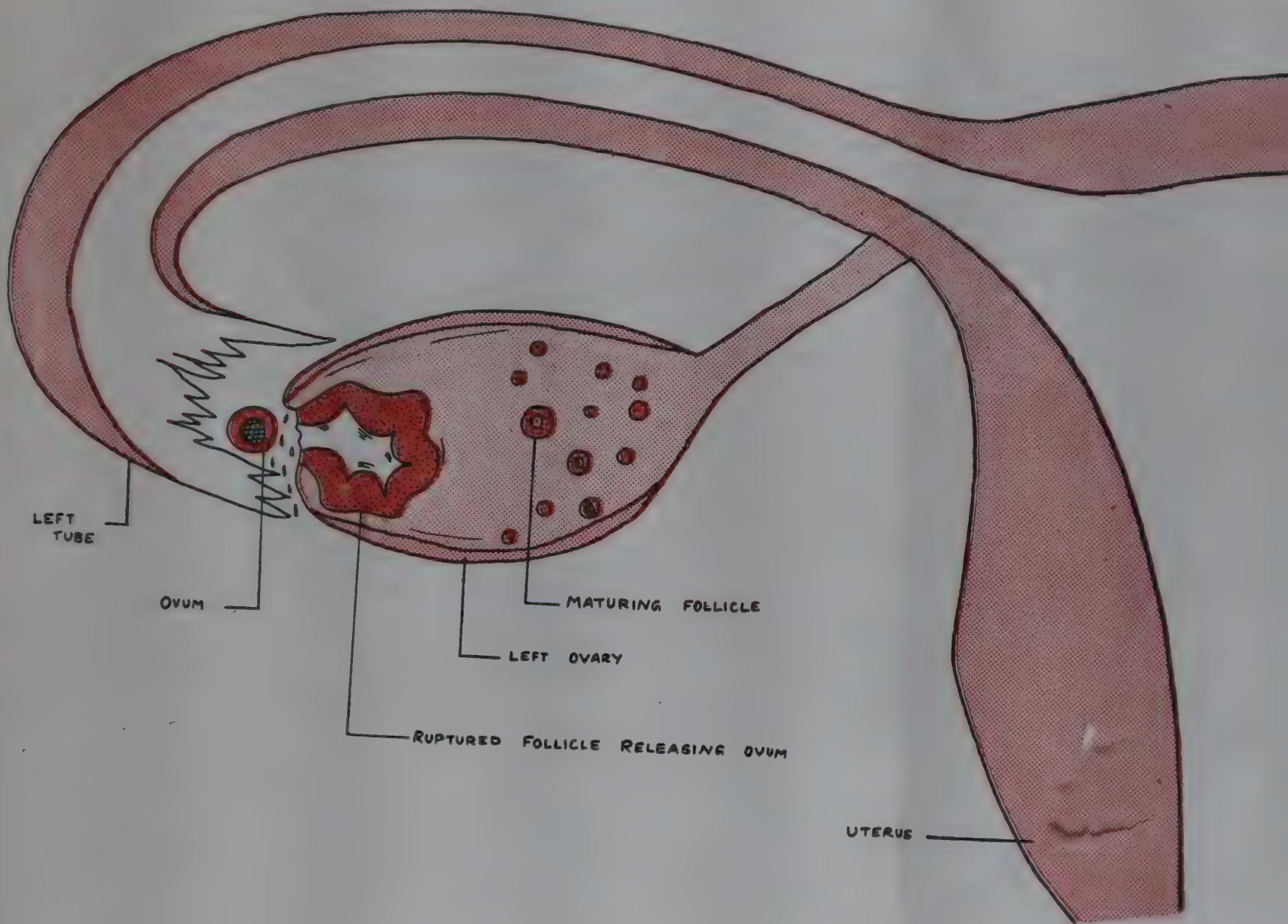
FERTILE MUCUS which comes when a woman can get pregnant.

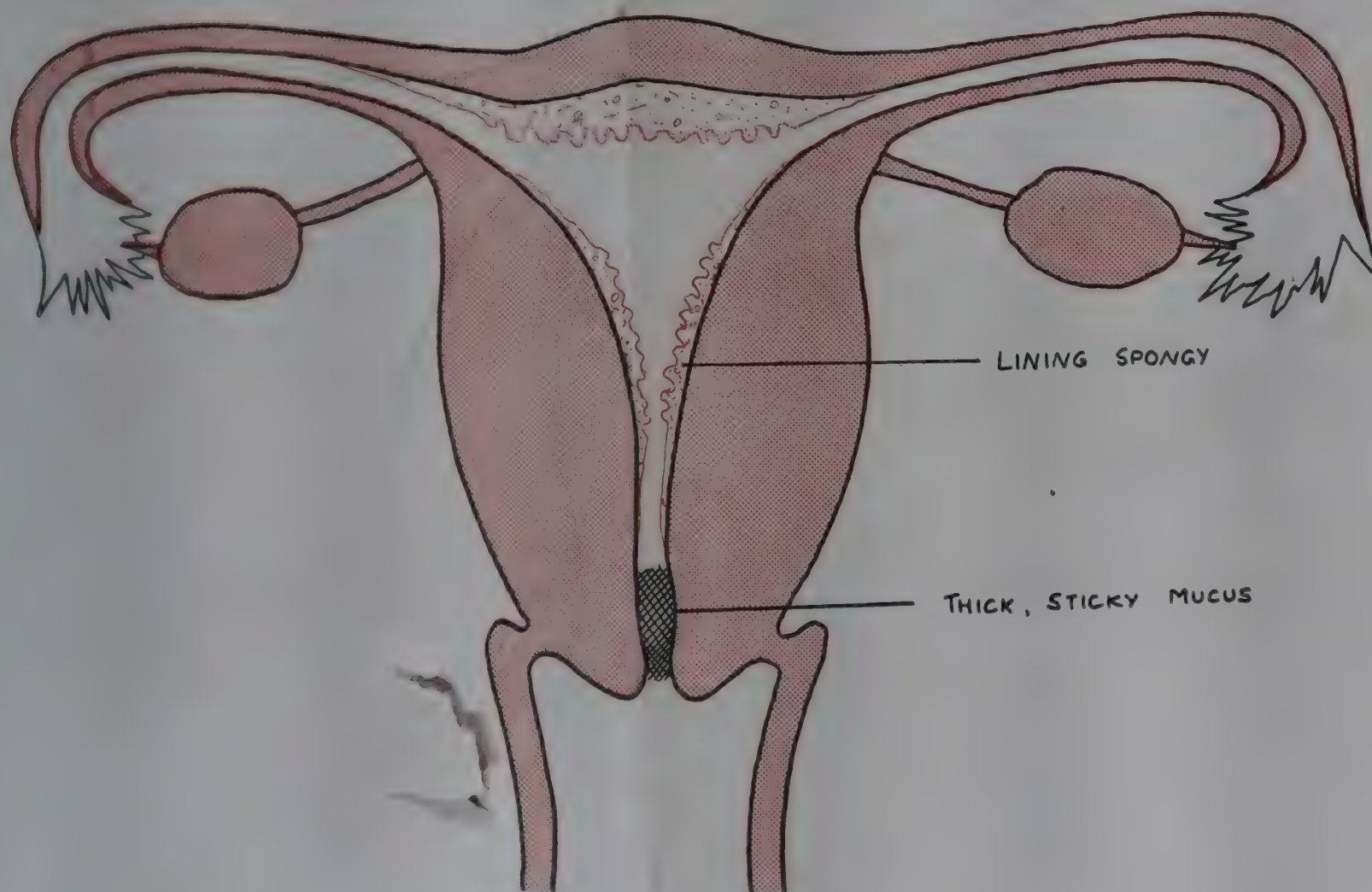
Infertile mucus gives no wet feeling and is thick, whitish or yellowish and is thick or curdy.

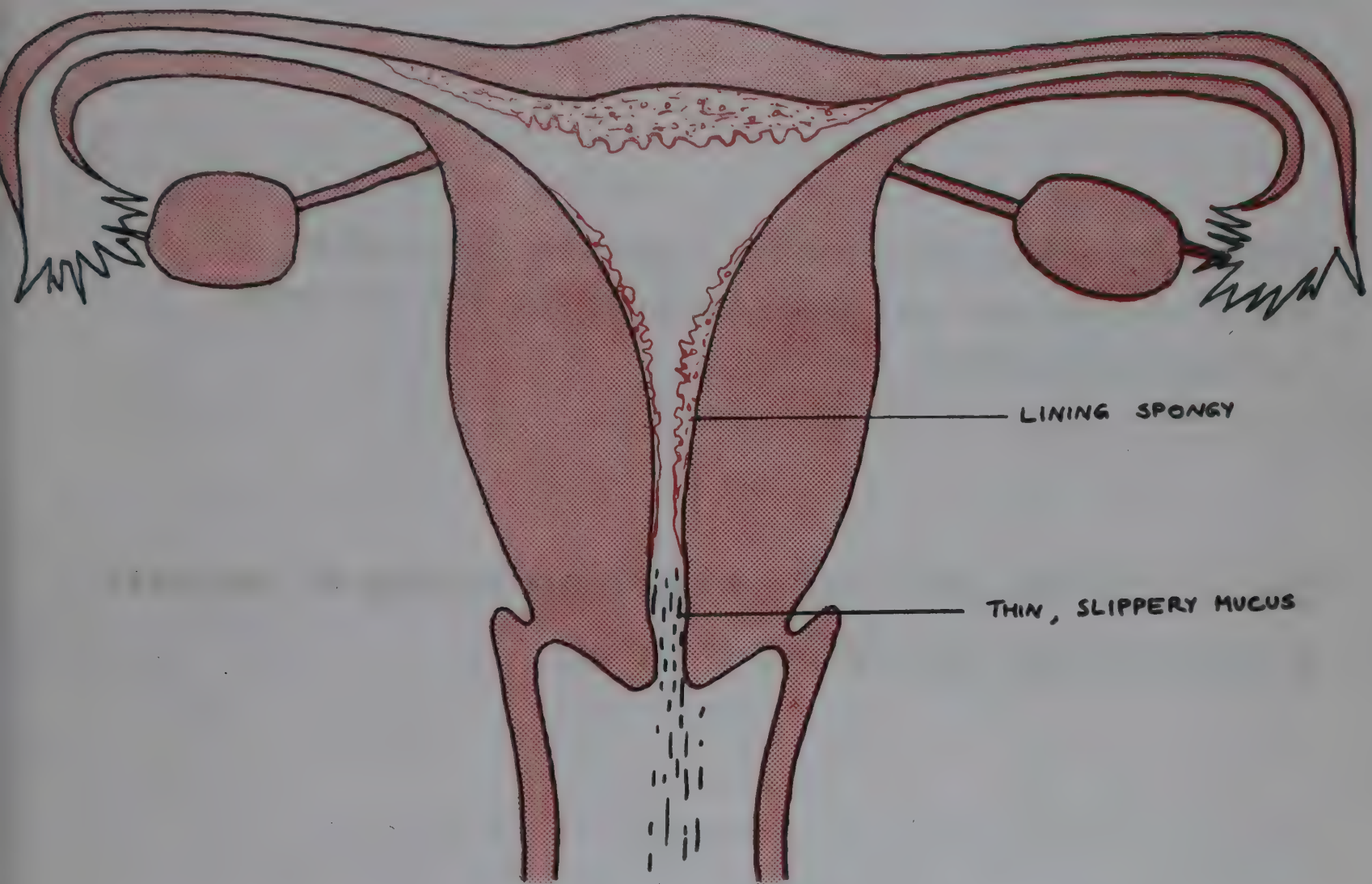
Sometimes it may be small in quantity and therefore, not seen at the vulva.

Fertile mucus gives a wet feeling. It looks thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and is slippery.

Even if the quantity is small and it cannot be seen there will be a wet lubricative feeling.







Feeling Fertility

Many women cannot check to see the mucus, as they do not have a toilet or privacy.

They can find out, the days when they cannot get pregnant only by the feeling of no wetness and wetness.

Without seeing the mucus, a woman can make out if she cannot get pregnant, if she has no wet feeling throughout the day.

On an infertile day, there will be no feeling of wetness or slipperiness throughout the day.

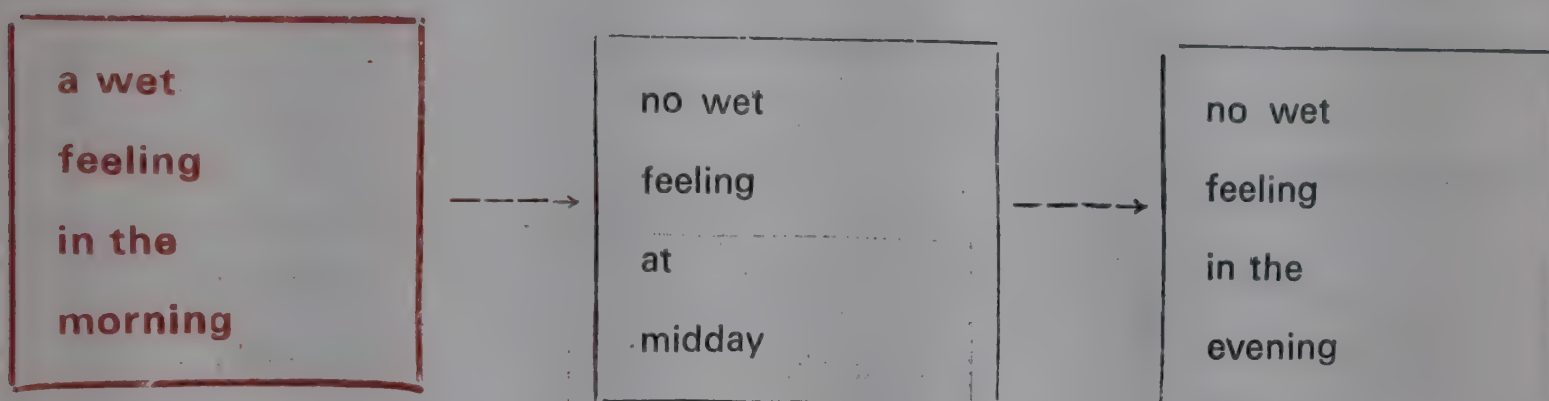
One way of finding the fertile days, when a woman can get pregnant, is by the feeling of wetness or lubrication or slipperiness at the vulva that is; she will feel slippery mucus coming out.

Without seeing the mucus, a woman can make out if she can get pregnant, if she has a wet feeling.

If a woman feels wetness, even for a short time in a day, it is a sign that it is a fertile day, when she can get pregnant, if she has sex relations.

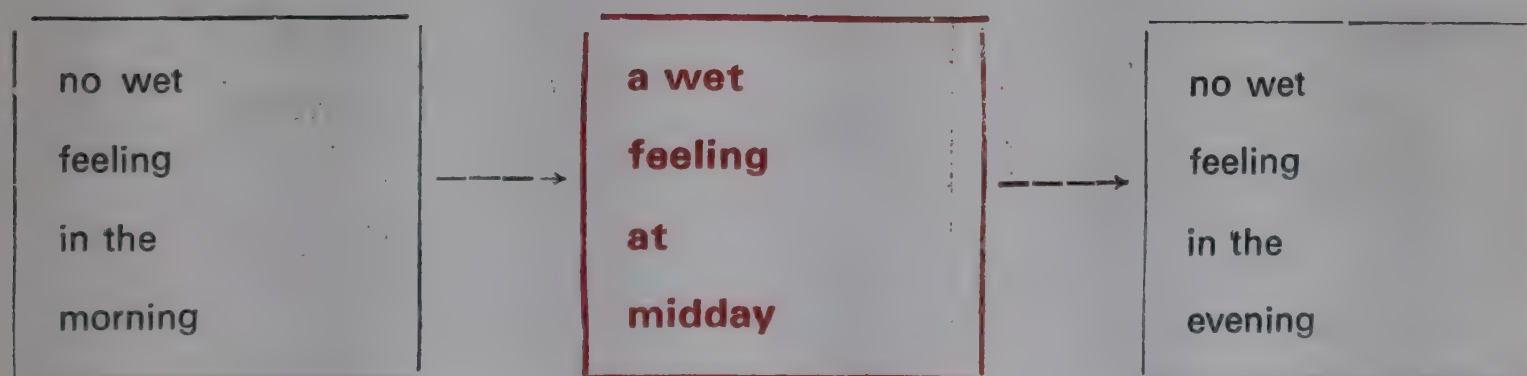
FOR EXAMPLE

If a woman has



it is a fertile day.

If a woman has



It is a fertile day. (A common pattern for Indian rural women).

If a woman has

no wet
feeling
in the
morning



no wet
feeling
at
midday



a wet
feeling
in the
evening

it is a fertile day.

If a woman has

thin, watery
colourless
or
cloudy
or
thick, mucus
with
a wet feeling
in the
morning



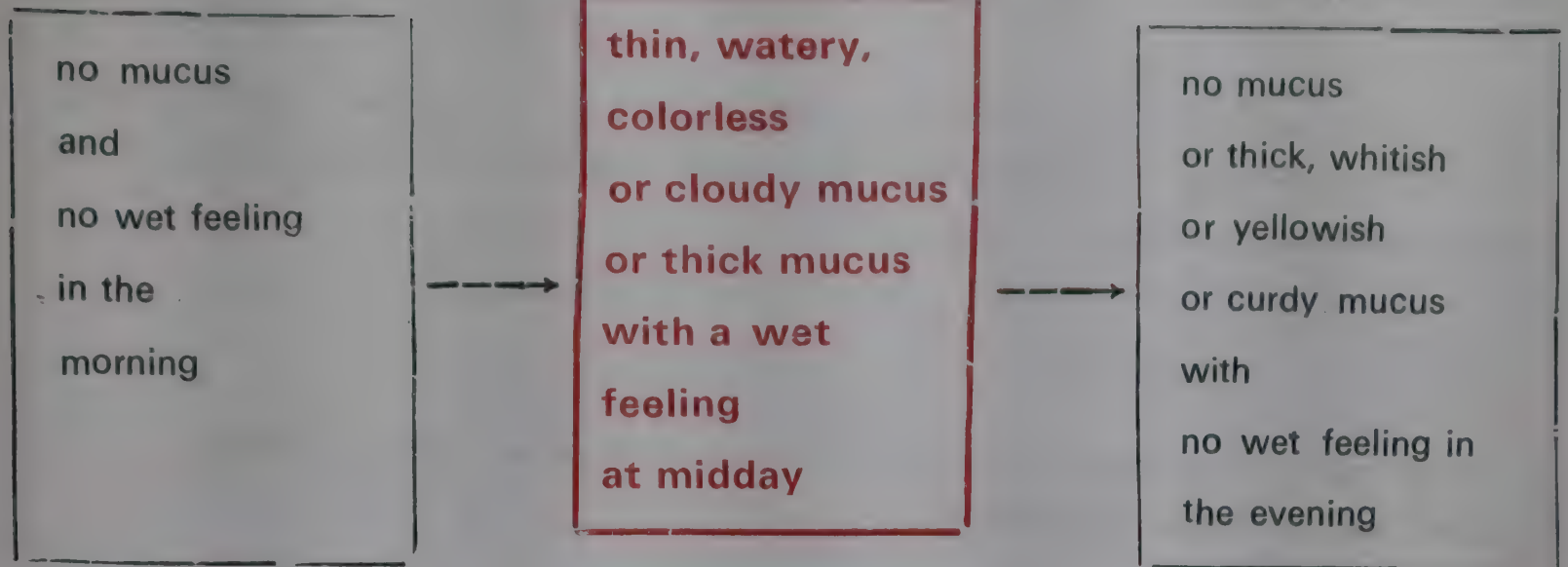
no mucus
or thick,
whitish
or yellowish
or curdy mucus
with
no wet feeling
at
midday



no mucus
or thick,
whitish
or yellowish
or curdy mucus
with
no wet feeling
in the
evening

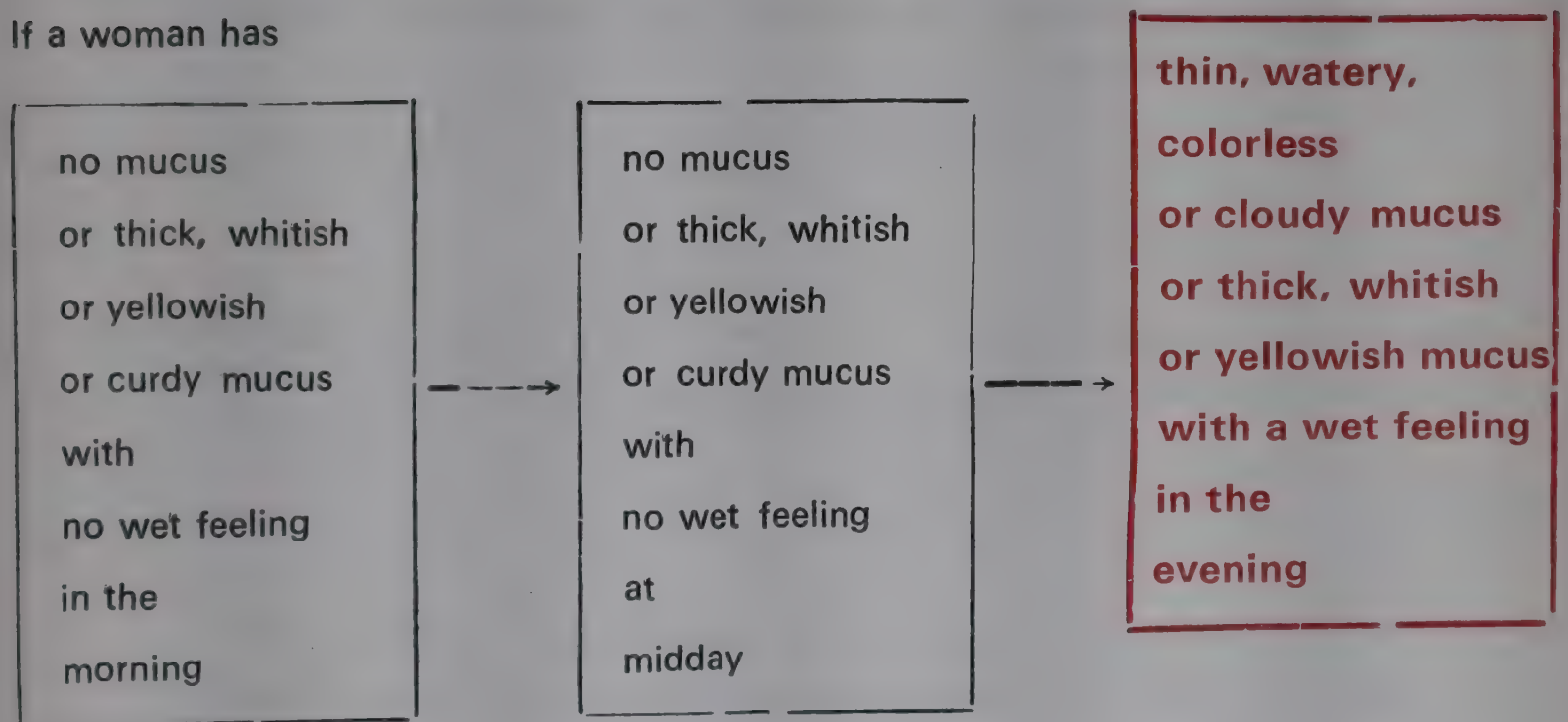
It is a fertile day.

If a woman has



it is a fertile day.

If a woman has



it is a fertile day.

Seminal fluid and mucus

Normally, if a woman has sex, the seminal fluid mixed with the woman's excitatory fluid, comes out at the vulva, 2-3 hours later. This seminal fluid looks like fertile mucus and can confuse a woman.

It is important for a woman to learn to make out the difference between seminal fluid and mucus—fertile and infertile.

Therefore, if a woman has sex at night and she washes and wipes the vulva the next morning or only wipes with a cloth, (if water is not available), the seminal fluid (overflow) can be removed from the vulva.

If a woman has sex during the day, 1-2 hours later, she can wash and wipe the vulva or only wipe with a cloth to remove the seminal fluid (overflow.)

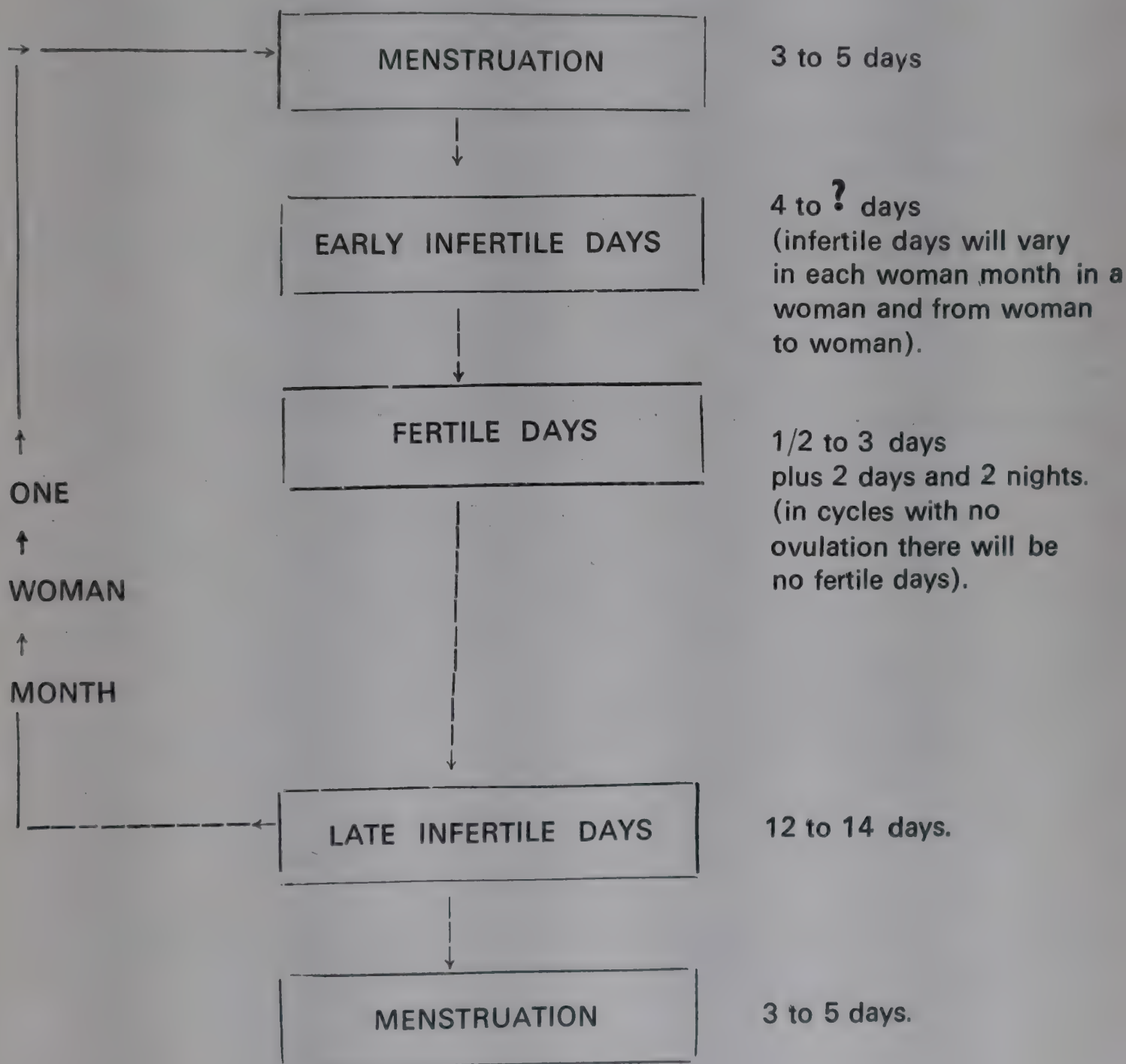
After the seminal fluid is removed, by washing and wiping or only wiping, any wet feeling or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery discharge will be probably fertile mucus.

The Fertile Days and the Woman Month (Menstrual Cycle)

A woman month (menstrual cycle) begins when menstrual bleeding starts.

Every month, a normal woman, between 15 and 45 years of age, will have the following events taking place in her body called the woman month (or menstrual cycle).

The events take place one after another.



If a woman is not pregnant, 2 weeks after the female egg is shed ie; after the last day of wetness or last day of the thin, watery colorless, or cloudy and slippery mucus she will start menstruation.

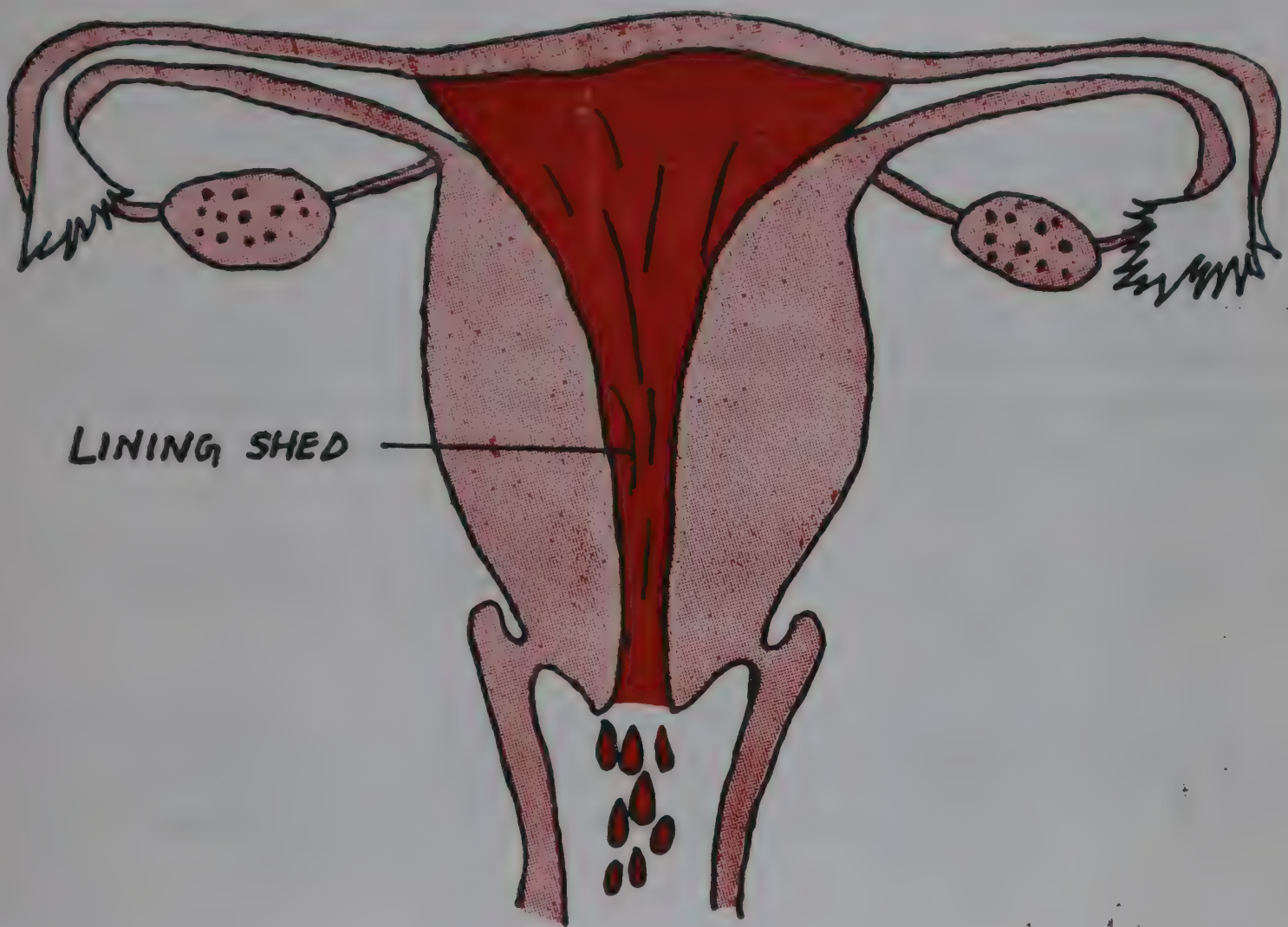
For all women menstruation begins 2 weeks after the fertile mucus stops.

Menstruation, is the bleeding, due to the shedding of the inner lining of the uterus, in women who are not pregnant.

Menstruation, comes at the end of a menstrual cycle or woman month.

Menstruation lasts for 3-5 days.

Normally, there is heavy bleeding on the first 2-3 days and then, scanty bleeding for 2 or 3 days and a brownish discharge or spotting for 1 or 2 days.



In every woman month (menstrual cycle) normally, after the menstrual bleeding stops, the infertile mucus begins i.e thick, whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus with no wet feeling. These are the **early infertile days**.

Some women, during the early infertile days may not see mucus and will have no wet feeling.

The number of infertile days, before the female egg ripens will vary in each woman month and from woman to woman.

When the female egg is ripe, the mucus changes, and becomes thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery and gives a wet feeling. Sometimes the mucus will remain thick and white but it will give a wet feeling. These are the **fertile days**.

After 1-3 days (rarely 4 days) the wet feeling and thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus stops.

Then the woman will notice thick, whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus with a dry feeling or no mucus with a dry feeling for 2 weeks. These are the **late infertile days**.

After 2 weeks, menstruation (bleeding), begins.

Normally, one or two days before menstruation, women have a feeling of wetness, with plenty of thick, curdy mucus. Sometimes the mucus may appear cloudy.

Short woman months

In some women, the female egg ripens early that is in 7 to 10 days after menstruation begins.

These women will have very few infertile days before the female egg ripens.

Soon after menstruation, these women will feel wetness and see thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery, mucus.

These are the fertile mucus days.

If they avoid sex on the fertile days i.e days of wetness plus 2 days and 2 nights, they will not get pregnant and will menstruate again 2 weeks later.

These women will menstruate every 21-25 days.

These women are said to have short cycles.

These women are normal.

Long woman months

In some women, the female egg ripens after a delay of 15-35 days sometimes every 3-6 months after menstruation.

Therefore, there will be a delay in the feeling of wetness and in seeing the fertile mucus.

Menstruation will be 2 weeks after the fertile mucus stops.

There will be a long infertile period before the fertile period.

This means that the menstrual cycles will be long.

These women are normal.

The long menstrual cycle, is due to the female egg ripening late.

Therefore, there will be a long infertile period after menstruation, before the days of wet feeling and fertile mucus.

Day of Change from Infertile to Fertile

WARNING :

The day of change from thick, whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus (infertile mucus) to thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus (fertile mucus) is a fertile day, when a woman can get pregnant.

Therefore, any change in mucus type or a feeling of wetness, even once during the day or cloudy mucus, is a sign of fertility.

Sex relations should be avoided on a day of change, to avoid a pregnancy.

Normally, the mucus on the day of change is cloudy and profuse with a feeling of wetness at least once in the day.

Therefore, to avoid a pregnancy, a woman should avoid sex relations on

- (1) a day of change in mucus**
- (2) a day of cloudy mucus**
- (3) any wet feeling, even once during the day.**

How Long is the Fertile Period?

The fertile period in each month, is the days of wetness or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus plus 2 days and 2 nights.

Normally, in women in India the wetness or the thin, watery, colorless, or cloudy and slippery mucus comes in patches and lasts only for 1-2 days. Therefore the fertile period will be $1 + 2$ or $2 + 2$ days.

In younger, healthy women, the fertile mucus and/or wetness lasts (comes) for 2 to 3 days rarely for 4 days.

Therefore the fertile period will be $2 + 2$ or $3 + 2$ days.

In anaemic, malnourished and weak women, the fertile mucus and/or wetness lasts (comes) for $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 day rarely for 2 days.

Therefore the fertile period will be $\frac{1}{2} + 2$ days or $1 + 2$ days.

In older women, over 35 years, the fertile mucus and/or wetness lasts for $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 day rarely 2 days. It sometimes comes in patches.

Therefore the fertile period will be in patches of $\frac{1}{2} + 2$ or $1 + 2$ days.

The fertile period in each month is short 3-4 days and rarely 5-6 days.

Woman months with no fertile period

Very young women (girls) after growing up i.e. after the first menstruation, for 2-3 years, are not fully mature.

They will have no bud on the ovary ripening and therefore no egg ripening in every woman month.

Therefore in some woman months, after menstruation and the infertile period, there will be no fertile period with a wet feeling or thin, watery colorless or cloudy mucus.

Instead there will be a long infertile period and the woman will menstruate again, without a fertile period.

When women get married at an early age, it is difficult to get pregnant, if there is no bud and female egg ripening in every woman month.

In some months the bud and female egg ripen.

In these months, they will have an obvious feeling of wetness or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus, on the days when the bud and female egg is ripe.

On these days, a woman if has sex relations she will get pregnant.

In older women, who are nearing 40 years or older than 40 years, every month a bud on the ovary will not ripen.

Therefore there will be no ripe female egg in every woman month.

There will be no wet feeling or thin watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus in the woman months with no bud and female egg ripening.

Sometimes, the bud may start to ripen (grow) but will not ripen completely. After some days, there may be some more growth of the bud. These women will feel wetness or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus in patches i.e. whenever the bud starts growing.

These women are infertile most of the time.

Fertility Awareness and Stress/ high fever—illness

The brain controls;

- 1. The ripening of the bud on the ovaries.**
- 2. The bursting of the ripe bud (ovulation).**

**Therefore, high fever, severe illness, severe stress, severe worry
or a sudden shock can effect;**

- 1. The ripening of the bud on the ovaries,**

or
- 2. The bursting of the ripe bud.**

If high fever or a sudden shock or severe sorrow or stress occur during menstruation or soon after menstruation, the ripening of a bud on the ovary will be delayed.

After menstruation there will be a number of days of no mucus with no wet feeling or thick, yellowish or white curdy mucus with no wet feeling.

There will be a long infertile period of no wet feeling.

A bud and female egg will ripen only when the fever comes down or the stress, or worry is less severe and reduced.

When a bud and female egg is ripe, the woman will have a wet feeling and notice thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus.

During this time the woman will be fertile and can get' pregnant.

If the high fever or a sudden shock, or severe sorrow or stress occur when the bud is ripening and the female egg is ripening, further growth may stop and the ripe bud may not burst, to let out (release) the ripe female egg (ovum).

Therefore, if there is high fever or a sudden shock or severe sorrow and stress during the feeling of wetness and/or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus, the wetness and thin, watery colorless, or cloudy and slippery mucus will stop without the bud bursting and letting out the ripe egg.

When the fever comes down or the stress is reduced, the ripe bud may burst and release the ovum.

Therefore, women with high fever or stress and worry during the days of wetness and/or thin watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus, should continue to be careful and check for wetness and thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus even after it stops.

Sex relations should be avoided on any day of wetness and/or thin watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus and for two days and nights after it stops.

Fertility after Childbirth

During pregnancy, a woman will have no fertile mucus. She will notice plenty of thick, whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus, as no female egg ripens during pregnancy.

After a child is born and when the bleeding stops, a woman will notice no mucus with a dry feeling or thick, curdy, whitish, or yellowish, mucus with a dry feeling.

Sometimes, women who are breast feeding have a lot of thick, whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus or even a milky discharge.

After child-birth, if there is complete breast feeding, that is the baby is fed every 2 to 2½ hours and even at night, no egg will ripen for 3 months. After this at any time a bud on the ovary will ripen.

If the baby does not drink the mother's milk (suckle at the breast)
every 2 to 2½ hours

or

there is a gap of 5-6 hours between breast feeding

or

the baby is not breast fed at night

the woman will have a bud and in it an egg ripening early, even soon
after the bleeding and lochia stop.

When the egg ripens in a breast feeding woman, she will notice a wet feeling and, or thin, watery, colorless, or cloudy and slippery mucus. She is fertile on these days and can get pregnant.

If the woman does not have sex on fertile days, two weeks after the wetness and/or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus stops, the woman will have her first menstruation after child birth.

If on the days of wetness or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus, a woman has sex, she will get pregnant and will have no menstruation after child birth.

This is how many women get pregnant after a child birth without having a menstruation.

To Identify Infertility and Fertility for Normal Women

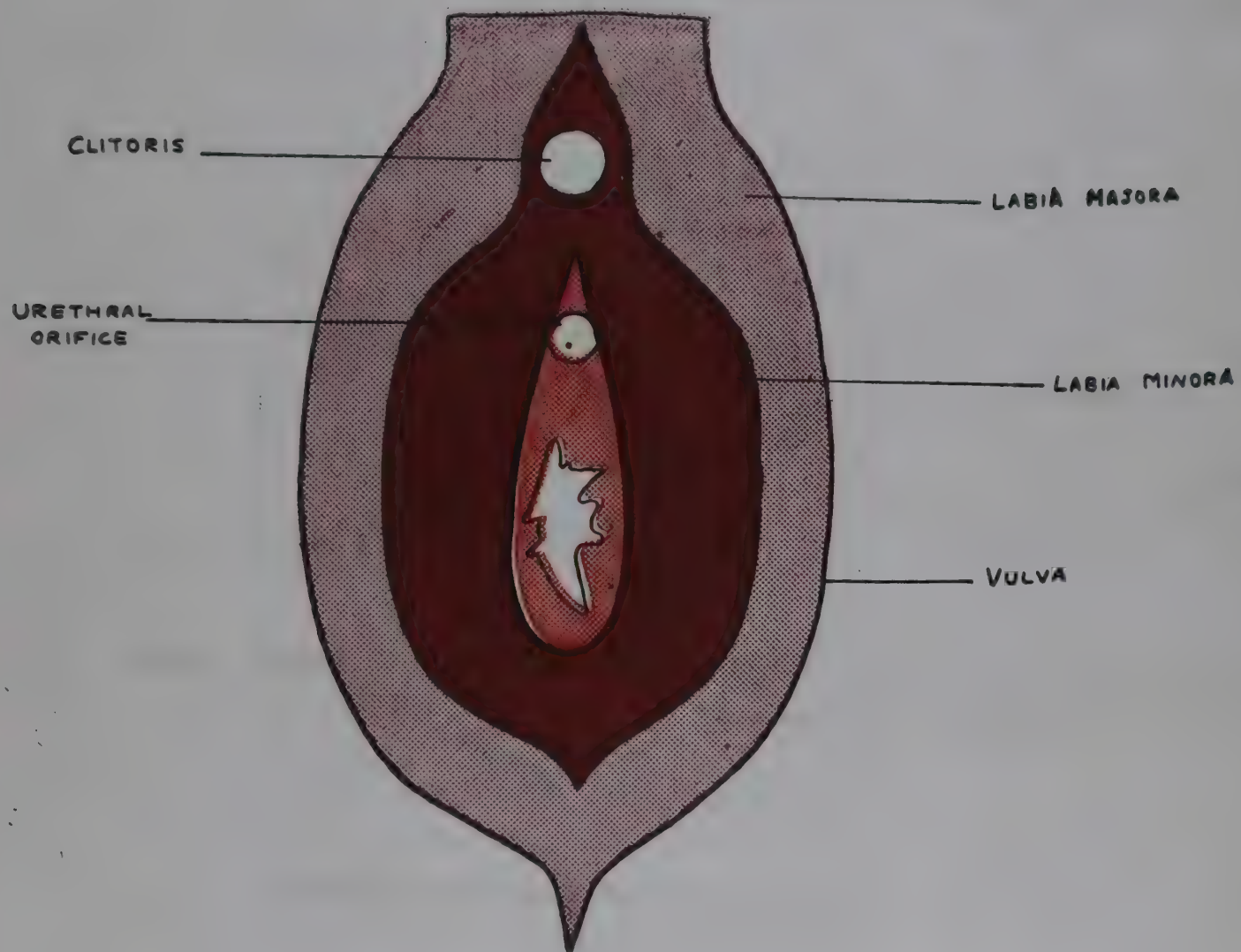
Checking for the feeling of wetness and no wetness

To check for the wet and not wet feeling, a woman has to stop 3 times a day in the morning, afternoon and evening and ask herself if she is feeling wet or not wet (lubricative or slippery) at the vulva or feeling something coming out.

Warning:

Wetness should not be checked with the fingers. The vulva and vagina are always moist and will feel wet to touch.

Normally, only during the first or second month, women have to take this trouble, After they experience the wetness once, they will later easily identify the wet feeling.



Checking for the type of mucus:

Check three times a day—in the morning, afternoon and evening at the vulva with the thumb and index finger. Pick up the mucus at the vulva with the finger and thumb.

(DO NOT CHECK INSIDE THE VAGINA FOR MUCUS).

Warning

Since women check the mucus while washing the vulva, there may be a dilution of the mucus.

Water can wash and dilute the mucus and thick mucus may not look white and can look watery.

Natural Family Planning

A woman finding out the infertile and fertile period and avoiding sex on the fertile days, to avoid a pregnancy is a method of natural family planning.

This method is easy and can be learned and used by all women :

1. Women who menstruate regularly.
2. Women who have irregular menstruation, (sometimes menstruation is early and sometimes delayed).
3. Women with short cycles (those who menstruate every 21-25 days, twice a month).
4. Women with long cycles (those who menstruate every $1\frac{1}{2}$ months or after 2 or 3 months).
5. Women after child-birth.
6. Women who are breast feeding and not menstruating.
7. Women who are young and just married and want to delay having a pregnancy.
8. Women who want to wait for sometime, before having the next child.
9. Women who do not want another child.

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India

Women whose husbands are not interested in family planning or are not co-operative, can also use this method.

Most poor women, learn to use the method without their husband's knowing.

It takes 3-4 months to tell the husband.

It has been found, that after the woman learns the method and she tells her husband about it, the husband co-operates, if the fertile period is short 3-4 days.

It has been found that even if the husband does not co-operate, like husbands who consume alcohol, the women can manage to avoid sex, if the fertile period is short (3-4 days).

Even alcoholics have been co-operative.

Although, a woman can use the method without the husband knowing and his co-operation, telling the husband and his co-operation makes the use of the method very easy.

It has been found, that with the women learning and using the method, the men have started, to depend on the wives to let them know when they are safe to have sex.

The method gives a woman the power to decide when to have sex and to avoid getting pregnant.

The other advantage of this method is that it is safe, with no side effects for the health of women.

It can be given up when a woman wants to get pregnant.

It will not have any ill effects on future children born.

It will take a woman one month (one menstrual cycle) to learn to find out her infertility and fertile period and 2 months to learn to use this as a method of natural family planning.

Even if a woman does not want to use fertility awareness as a method of family planning, she should learn to find out her infertile and fertile patterns.

It will help her to understand her infertility and fertility patterns.

She can see what power she has, to understand the working of her body and how she can regulate her fertility.

She can use this experience at any time she wants.

Unmarried women will find it easy to find out their infertile and fertile periods.

Unmarried women should check three times a day after menstruation to study their pattern of infertility and fertility.

Married women will take time to learn as they have to also find out the difference between seminal fluid and fertile mucus.

Fertility Awareness to Achieve a Pregnancy

This method can also be used to have a healthy baby, if a woman has sex during the fertile period—the days of wetness or the days of thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus.

It has been found that woman of low fertility have no bud and egg ripening in every woman month. Therefore there are months with no fertile days.

For a woman who has had no child and wants to get pregnant.

1. After menstruation, she should try to avoid sex on the days of no mucus and no wet feeling and the days of thick, whitish or yellowish, or curdy mucus with no wet feeling.

(AVOIDING SEX INCREASES THE NUMBER OF SPERMS IN THE SEMEN.)

2. The woman can have sex on a day of wetness, or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy mucus to get pregnant.

It has been found that women who have 2-3 days of wetness or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy slippery mucus can have

a female child.

If they have sex on the first day of wetness or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus,

a male child.

If they have sex on the last day of wetness or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus.

To ensure learning and to avoid confusion, a normal woman has to start learning fertility awareness soon after menstruation, that is at the beginning of a woman month.

Women who are breast-feeding and have not started menstruation learn to identify their infertility. It takes 1 month to learn "infertility awareness"

These women will have sex when they are infertile.

These women will learn to identify fertility only after they experience fertile days, before the first menstruation after child birth.

Part II presents the teaching of fertility awareness and its use as a method of family planning for normal menstruating women.

(Pages 59 to 110)

Part III presents the learning and teaching of fertility (infertility) awareness and its use as a method of family planning for breast feeding, non menstruating women.

(Pages 111 to 146)

PART II

Teaching Fertility Awareness

Teaching women to - use Natural Family Planning

INTRODUCTION

Learning Fertility Awareness and Natural Family Planning

Fertility Awareness and Natural Family Planning is learned in phases or parts—Learning Months I, II and III.

It takes three months to learn fertility awareness and its use—
natural family planning.

Learning fertility awareness is referred to as Learning Month 1.

Learning to use fertility awareness, as a method of natural family planning, is referred to as Learning Months II and III.

In Learning month I, the women learns to find out

1. her infertile days
2. her fertile days
3. the difference between seminal fluid and mucus.

In Learning Month II a women learns—

1. to use infertile mucus days for sex
2. to find out the difference between seminal fluid (overflow) and fertile mucus.

In Learning Month III, the woman learns to use the actual natural method of family planning called Praganan Jagrooti or the Modified Mucus Method.

In the first learning month, sex is to be avoided during the early infertile mucus days and during the fertile mucus days.

This is to assist the women in finding out the difference between the infertile and fertile mucus.

In the learning month II, the abstinence is not long.

The sexual abstinence (that is the days of no sex) for the modified mucus method (learning month III) is only on the fertile days—— 3 to 5 days each month at mid cycle.

Illiterate women cannot be taught fertility awareness and its use in one day.

The teaching has to be repeated for them to remember.

Therefore the women have to be met frequently to teach them the method.

Only after a woman finds out her infertile and fertile signs will she have confidence in her power.

A woman needs to be supported while learning the method, till she gains confidence.

This support has to come from the person teaching her the method (the animator/village woman leader).

The women will need support, if their husbands are not cooperative, especially during the days when they have to avoid sex.

To cater to the need for repeated teaching and support, a pattern of house visits and a method of teaching is used.

The pattern of house visits and the instruction in each visit, is based on assisting the woman to learn from her own experiences, with the support of the animator/instructor.

After the 3 learning months, the animator should form the women into groups, so that they can have the support of other women in the community.

CHAPTER I

Learning Month I

Learning Fertility Awareness

1. No sex on the days of menstruation (bleeding)
2. When the bleeding stops, a woman should check at the vulva at least 3 times a day

in the morning

at midday

in the evening.

for

the feeling of no wetness or wetness

and

mucus

NOTE

The feeling of wetness is checked by stopping and asking the question whether there is a feeling of no wetness or wetness at the vulva.

**3. On a day of no wet feeling,
if there is no mucus at the vulva,
a woman can have sex relations at night.**

4. After sex at night, the next day

**A. in the morning, the vulva should be washed and wiped or only wiped
(if there is no water) to remove the seminal fluid (overflow).**

**B. at midday and in the evening, the feeling of no wetness
or wetness should be checked.**

(If possible the mucus should also be checked).

C. No sex relations that day or night

5. If the next day is a day

with no wet feeling

and

no mucus

the woman can have sex at night.

6. Sex at night is followed, the next day

A. in the morning by washing and wiping or only wiping
the vulva.

B. checking for wetness and mucus at midday and in the
evening.

C. No sex relations that day and night.

7. The woman continues checking for the feeling of no wetness
and the mucus.

8. When the thick, whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus is seen

with a feeling of no wetness

Sex relations are avoided.

'Although a day of no wetness with thick, whitish, or yellowish or curdy mucus is' a sign of infertility (when a woman cannot get pregnant),

sex is avoided to help the women make out the difference between the infertile and fertile mucus.

NOTE :

If the abstinence is a problem or if the husband is non-cooperative on a day of no wetness and thick, whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus, the woman can have sex at night.

If she has sex in the night, the next day

- A. in the morning she should wash and wipe or only wipe the vulva.
- B. at midday and in the evening she has to check for the feeling and the type of mucus at the vulva.
- C. No sex relations that day and night.

9. As soon as there is a **wet feeling**

or

cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus.

a woman knows that she is in her **Fertile Period (Unsafe Period)** when she can get pregnant.

Therefore sex has to be avoided, even if the husband is not cooperative and insists on sex.

WARNING :

If the woman has sex on a day of wetness or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy mucus—she will definitely get pregnant.

10. After the feeling of wetness stops

and

the thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus

stops

Sex must be avoided for 2 more days and nights (as the woman is still fertile).

11. A women can have sex after that on all days till menstruation begins, if there is no wet feeling.

12 Any day with a wet feeling means no sex that day and night.

CHAPTER 2

Learning Month II

Learning Natural Family Planning

- 1 No sex on the days of menstruation (bleeding).
2. When the bleeding stops the woman should **check** at the vulva at least 3 times a day

in the morning

at midday

in the evening

for

the feeling of no wetness or wetness

and

infertile and fertile mucus.

3. On a day of no wet feeling at the vulva

with

no mucus

the woman can have sex relations at night.

On a day of no wet feeling at the vulva

with

thick, whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus at the vulva

the woman can have sex relations at night.

4. After sex at night, the next day

A. in the morning the woman should wash and wipe the vulva or only wipe to remove the seminal fluid.

B. at midday and in the evening she should check for the feeling and the type of mucus.

C. She should avoid sex relations that day and night.

WARNING

If the wet feeling is obvious at midday or in the evening

or

if there is profuse mucus which is

cloudy

or

thin

watery, colorless

and

slippery

The woman should avoid sex relations on that day and for 2 more days and nights.

(The fertile mucus may have started).

5. When there is a patch of wetness at the vulva

or

cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery, colorless and slippery mucus

the woman knows that fertile mucus has begun.

**She should avoid sex relations and all sexual contact
that day and night.**

6. The woman continues to avoid sex

till

the wet feeling stops

and

**the thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus stops,
and for another 2 days and nights.**

**7. The rest of the days till menstruation begins are safe for sex
if there is no wet feeling.**

**8. If there is a wet feeling, sex should be avoided
that day and night.**

WARNING

Sex is avoided on

1. A day the women forgets to check for the feeling of wetness or the mucus.

or

2. A day when she is not sure of the feeling or the type of mucus.

3. On a day of wetness even for a short time.

CHAPTER 3

Learning Month III

The Modified Mucus Method of Natural Family Planning

In this month the actual method—PRAJANAN JAGROOTI—
THE MODIFIED MUCUS METHOD IS USED.

This learning month is referred to as Learning Month III

1. If there is no wet feeling on the last days of menstruation i.e.
when there is a brownish discharge a woman can have sex relations.

2. After sex at night, the next day

A. in the morning the woman should wash and wipe or only
wipe the vulva.

B. at midday and in the evening she should check for
the feeling of wetness or no wetness at the vulva

(If possible she can check for the mucus too.)

C. If the woman has

no wet feeling even once in the day

She is safe and can have sex at night.

WARNING :

If at midday or in the evening she has

a wet feeling

or

if she has a **profuse discharge** of cloudy or thin, watery,
colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus

She should avoid sex that day and night.

If at midday or in the evening

the wetness is obvious

and

there is a profuse mucus discharge

**She should avoid sex on that day and night
and 2 more days and nights.**

WARNING :

Women should have sex relations on the early infertile days to overcome the problem of abstinence during the fertile days,

5. If there is a

feeling of wetness even once in the day

or

cloudy mucus

or

thin watery, colorless, cloudy mucus

Sex is to be avoided on that day and for 2 more days and nights.

(It is the day of change from infertile to fertile and is a fertile day).

6. If there is a feeling of wetness and/or thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus, the fertile days have started.

Sex is avoided till the feeling of wetness stops

or

the last day of thin, watery, colorless or cloudy mucus

and

2 more days and nights.

7. The rest of the days till menstruation are safe for sex, if
THERE IS NO WET FEELING.

8. If there is any feeling of wetness (even after the fertile period) even once in the day, sex is to be avoided at night.

Sex is to be avoided

1. On a day the woman forgets to check for the feeling of wetness.
2. A day the woman is not sure of the feeling or the type of mucus (infertile or fertile)
3. On a day even of wetness for a short time.
4. On a day of thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus.

CHAPTER 4

Method of Teaching.

(PATTERNS OF HOUSE-VISITING)

The method of teaching illiterate women, is based on
the needs of illiterate woman
who have a low motivation,
lack of confidence in their potential
are not used to learning
have problems understanding and remembering
all that is explained to them.

Regular house-visits have been planned to support women at certain times during the learning months

1. the beginning of the woman month
2. at the infertile mucus stage
3. at the fertile mucus stage.

EACH HOUSE VISIT HAS SPECIFIC AIMS

The aims of each visit and the teaching message in each house-visit have been planned on the learning needs of illiterate, poor women.

Patterns of House-visiting

INTRODUCTORY VISIT (FIRST VISIT TO A WOMAN)

When a woman is first visited in her home, after a friendly introduction and exchange, she is made aware of women's health needs, a woman's power and fertility awareness.

This visit is at any time of the month (cycle).

The woman is given fertility awareness education.

If the woman is
interested in learning fertility awareness
and
its use as means of natural family planning
she is initiated into learning and use
at the beginning of the next cycle.

She starts learning at menstruation or within a week of the beginning of menstruation.

The pattern of visits for a woman who wants to learn fertility awareness and its use is as follows:

LEARNING MONTH I

Learning Fertility Awareness

- | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Visit 1 | —During or soon after menstruation—to repeat how to learn fertility awareness. |
| Visit 2 | —5 to 7 days after visit 1—to offer support during the early infertile phase that is before the fertile period. |
| Visit 3 | —5 to 7 days after visit 2—during the fertile period. |

LEARNING MONTH II

Learning to use Natural Family Planning

VISIT 1 — During or soon after menstruation.

VISIT 2 — 5 to 7 days after visit 1—during the early infertile phase.

VISIT 3 — 5 to 7 days after visit 2—during the fertile period.

LEARNING MONTH III

To learn to use the Natural Family Planning method—Prajanan Jagrooti—the Modified Mucus Method.

VISIT 1 — During or soon after menstruation

VISIT 2 — 5 to 7 days after visit 1.

VISIT 3 — 5 to 7 days after visit 2.

MONTH IV

VISIT 1 — During or soon after menstruation.

After this the women can be visited to discuss other problems.

The women's health and development problems can be surfaced and identified (person to person and through group meetings).

Fertility Awareness Education and teaching its use during regular house-visiting increases the rapport between the village level leader (instructor) and the women.

Women can then be organised into small groups for meetings to discuss their experiences. Based on their problems and needs they can plan further action as a group.

CHAPTER 5

Introductory Visit

Creating an Awareness of Women's Potential and Fertility Awareness

TIME OF VISIT Any time of the month. The visit should be at a time when women are free to talk and listen (prime time).

- AIM**
1. To create a rapport
 2. To create an awareness of the role of women and their potential.
 3. To teach fertility awareness.
 4. To teach how to learn to identify the woman's infertility and fertility.
 5. To find out if the woman wants to learn to use fertility awareness as a means of family planning.

MESSAGE CONTENT

The content of the message in this Visit is Part I--Fertility Awareness of this guide page 1 to 57.

Lead questions to ask :

How many children do you have —Boys ? Girls ?

Do you want to have a child?

Are you pregnant?

When do you want to have a child?

Have you used family planning before?

What method are you using, now?

Do you want to learn fertility awareness only, or fertility awareness and how to use it to avoid a pregnancy?

When was your last menstruation?

Do you menstruate every month, or twice a month?

After how many days do you menstruate?

Are you breast feeding?

From the woman's answers the instructor can come to know, if the woman is interested in spacing; what method of family planning she has used and is using; if she is interested in learning fertility awareness and natural family planning; when she has menstruated; if she is pregnant; if she has normal, short or long cycles; or if she is breast-feeding and not menstruating.

Selecting the date of the next visit

If the woman is breast feeding and non-menstruating and is interested in learning fertility awareness turn to Part III of the guide.

If the woman is menstruating at the time of the first visit or she has menstruated 2—3 days earlier, she is taught Learning Month I at the introductory visit i.e. according to visit I of teaching Month I. Pages 87 to 88.

If the woman is a woman who is menstruating and is interested in learning fertility awareness and natural family planning she is visited again.

The next visit is

around the expected date of the next menstruation

to teach the woman

LEARNING MONTH I

The women is told that she will be visited again to teach her the method.

CHAPTER 6

Teaching Month I

HOUSE VISITS 1, 2, 3.

HOUSE VISIT 1

- TIME OF VISIT :** 2—3 days after the expected date of menstruation, (if menstruation has not started this visit is repeated 3—5 days later).
- AIMS :**
1. To help the women define her infertility and fertility, to learn fertility awareness.
 2. To initiate the woman into identifying her infertility and fertility.
 3. To teach the use of fertility awareness as a method of family planning (Learning Month 1)

The woman starts use of the method with menstruation.

If the woman has not started menstruation, it may be due to a delay or she may be pregnant.

She is visited every week till she starts menstruating.

(if after 4 weeks, the woman has not started menstruating she may be pregnant. She will then not be in a position to learn).

In this visit the woman is taught

LEARNING MONTH I.

The teaching is according to part II Chapter I—page 63 to 68.

The women is told to start checking for
the feeling of wetness and no wetness
and
mucus at the vulva

**The woman is told that she will be visited again 5—7 days
later**

For women with short woman months, who menstruate every 11 to 26
days, they are **visited 5 days later and not 7 days (1 week) later.**

Teaching Month

HOUSE VISIT 2

TIME OF VISIT

5—7 days after Visit 1.

(In the early infertile phase of Learning Month 1)

AIMS

1. To remind the women to check of infertility and fertility.
2. To help the women to identify the period of infertile mucus.
3. To repeat 'how to use the method in learning Month 1.
4. To offer the women support in following the method.

Women with short woman months (cycles) would have noticed thick, whitish or yellowish or cloudy mucus.

Women with normal woman months (cycles) would have also started the thick mucus days.

Women with long woman months (cycles) would be in the no mucus and no wet feeling days.

Lead Questions to ask

Are you feeling wet or not ?

This morning did you notice the mucus ?

What was the mucus like ?

Yesterday did you feel wet or not wet in the morning, afternoon and evening ?

What did you notice yesterday—in the morning, in the afternoon and evening ?

According to the women's answers she is explained :

what mucus she is feeling and has seen——

infertile (during which she cannot get pregnant).

fertile (during which she can get pregnant).

Repeat

LEARNING MONTH I

If the husband is not cooperative

the woman is given the choice to have sex on an infertile day.

She can use a day of no wet

feeling and thick whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus.

She then follows the next day after sex at night rule.

WARNING

To avoid all sexual contact on the days of

wet feeling,

cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery, colorless and slippery mucus

and

2 more days and nights after the wetness and

thin watery, colourless cloudy and slippery mucus stops

To avoid sex

if she forgets to check for the feeling and the mucus

To avoid sex

if she is not sure of the feeling

or

type of mucus

**Warn the woman with short cycles that they would,
see and feel the fertile mucus in a day or two.**

**The woman is told that she will be visited again 5-7 days
later when the fertile days will begin.**

Teaching Month I

HOUSE VISIT 3

TIME OF VISIT	5-7 days after Visit II. (when the fertile mucus and wetness has begun or is to begin).
AIMS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To offer support to follow the method.2. To repeat how to use the method in Learning Month I.3. To recall the signs of fertility and the number of days of fertility based on the wet feeling and the changes in the mucus quality.4. To remind the woman to check for fertility.

Women with short woman months would have already passed the fertile phase and will be able to describe their fertile period signs i.e. the feeling of wetness and the type of mucus.

Women with normal woman months will be in the fertile phase or would have just completed the fertile phase.

Women with long woman months will be only in the early infertile phase and would be seeing thick mucus and having no wet feeling.

Lead questions to ask

Are you feeling wet or not wet?

What did you see this morning?

What did you notice yesterday?

Did you feel wet or not wet?

What did you notice the day before yesterday and did you feel wet or not wet?

According to her answer, tell her what mucus she has seen and felt.

Women who are yet to reach the fertile phase or are in the fertile phase are advised

to avoid sex on any days of wetness and fertile mucus till the fertile mucus stops and for 2 more days and nights.

The woman is told that she will be visited again around the days of menstruation—to teach her “how to use the method in Learning Month II”

NOTE:

The woman is told that in case she is not visited when menstruation begins, she should continue to use the method as she did in Learning Month I, till she is visited again to teach Learning Month II.

CHAPTER 7

Teaching Month 2

(HOUSE VISITS 1, 2, 3)

HOUSE VISIT 1

TIME OF VISIT	Around the expected date of menstruation, (2 weeks after Visit 3 of Teaching Month I).
AIMS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To recall the signs of fertility and infertility in Learning Month I.2. To teach the use of the method in Learning Month II.3. To offer support.

Lead questions to ask

Are you menstruating?

Did you feel the wetness and slipperiness of fertile mucus?

For how many days did you have the wet feeling?

Did you have the wet feeling the whole day?

For how many days did you see it?

Did you see the thin, watery, colorless or cloudy, slippery mucus?

Did you wait for 2 days and nights after fertile mucus or wetness had stopped?

The woman is told that in this month
she will learn how to use **Natural Family Planning to avoid a pregnancy.**

The woman is taught

LEARNING MONTH II

according to part II —Chapter II—pages 69 to 73

**She is encouraged to have sex relations on the infertile days
to overcome the problem of abstinence during the fertile days.**

**The woman is told that she will be visited again 5-7 days later
when infertile mucus begins.**

Teachning Month 2

HOUSE VISIT 2

TIME OF VISIT : 5-7 days after visit I of teaching Month II
(i.e. during the early infertile phase).

AIMS : 1. To offer support

2. To help the women to identify the infertile type of mucus.

3. To remind the women to check for fertility.

Women with short woman months would already be in the phase of thick, whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus with no wet feeling and will be soon in the fertile phase.

Women with normal woman months would have started thick, whitish, or yellowish or curdy mucus—with no wet feelng.

Women with long woman months would be about to reach the thick mucus phase.

Lead questions to ask

Are you checking for the feeling of wetness and no wetness ?

Are you checking for the mucus ?

What did you see this morning ?

Are you feeling wet or not wet ?

What did you feel yesterday ?

What did you see yesterday ?

What did you see the day before yesterday ?

What did you feel the day before yesterday ?

According to her answer, tell her
whether she was fertile or infertile the day before
and whether she is fertile or infertile on the day of the visit.

Repeat

LEARNING MONTHS II

**Warn women with short cycles to be careful as they
would feel and see fertility in a day or two.**

The woman should be advised to watch carefully for the wet feeling and the thin, cloudy mucus and watery, colourless and slippery mucus.

The woman is warned not to have sex relations and sexual contact on these days and for 2 more days and nights.

The woman is told that she will be visited again 5-7 days later, when the wetness and thin, watery, colourless, or cloudy and slippery mucus will begin.

Teaching Month 2

HOUSE VISIT-3

TIME OF VISIT

5-7 days after visit 2 of teaching
Month II
(when the fertile phase has begun).

AIMS

1. To remind the woman to check for fertility
2. To repeat how to use the method
3. To help the woman identify the period of fertility.

Women with short woman months (cycles) will have passed the fertile mucus stage.

Women with normal woman months (cycles) may be in the fertile stage.

Women with long cycles will be in the early infertile mucus stage.

Lead questions to ask

Have you noticed mucus since the last visit ?

Describe the mucus ?

What did you feel ?

What did you feel yesterday ?

What type of mucus did you see yesterday ?

What did you feel this morning ?

What type of mucus did you see this morning ?

According to her answers explain to her whether she is infertile or fertile.

If the woman is in the fertile mucus stage she must be warned to avoid sex on the days of wetness and thin, watery, colorless or cloudy mucus and for 2 more days and nights.

Women with long cycles who are yet to reach the fertile mucus stage must be warned

to watch carefully for

the day of change

from

infertile to fertile

and

the feeling of wetness even once during the day and fertile mucus.

The woman is told that she will be visited again around the days of the next menstruation to teach her use of the actual method.

CHAPTER 8

Teaching Month 3 (the Modified Mucus Method)

HOUSE VISIT-1, 2, 3.

HOUSE VISIT 1

- TIME OF VISIT** : Around the date of menstruation
(2 weeks after Visit 2 of teaching Month II).
- AIMS** :
1. To recall signs of fertility and infertility in learning Month II.
 2. To teach use of the method—in learning month 3.
 3. To offer support.

The woman is told that she has learned to find out when she can get pregnant and how to avoid a pregnancy and that she has learned to use natural family planning.

The woman is told that from this month she will learn to use the actual natural family planning method which is easy to use. The days of abstinence will be short 3-4 days rarely 5.

Lead questions to ask

For how many days did you feel wetness last month?

For how many days did you notice the thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus?

Did you wait for 2 days and nights after that?

Are you menstruating?

Teach

LEARNING MONTH III

(the Modified Mucus Method—Prajanan Jagrooti)
according to Part II Chapter III pages 74 to 77

The woman is told that she will be visited 5-7 days later.

Teaching Month 3

HOUSE VISIT 2

TIME OF VISIT : 1 week after Visit 1 of teaching Month III
(when the infertile mucus begins).

AIMS : 1. To repeat use of the method
2. To help in identification of the infertile period.
3. To remind the woman to continue use.

Women with short woman months will be in the infertile mucus phase.

Women with normal woman months will be in the infertile phase.

Women with long cycles will be in the infertile phase.

Warn women with short cycles to watch carefully for the feeling of wetness and fertile mucus which they would feel and see in one or two days time.

Lead questions to ask

Are you feeling wet or not wet ?

What did you feel in the morning ?

What was the mucus like ?

What did you feel yesterday ?

What did you see yesterday ?

Did you have sex relations ?

What did you feel the day before yesterday ?

According to her description the woman is told whether she is infertile or fertile.

Repeat

LEARNING MONTH III

The woman is told that she will be visited again 7 days later.

Teaching Month 3

HOUSE VISIT 3

TIME OF VISIT	5-7 days after Visit 2 (during the fertile phase).
AIMS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To remind the woman about her fertility2. To repeat the teaching—rules of the method from Month III onwards.3. To offer support.

Women with short cycles would have passed the fertile phase.

Women with normal cycles will be in the fertile phase.

Women with long cycles must be warned to check carefully for the feeling of wetness and fertile mucus.

Lead Questions to ask

Did you feel wet after the last visit?

Did you see mucus after the last visit?

Describe the type of mucus?

Are you feeling wet or not wet?

What mucus did you notice this morning?

According to the woman's descriptions and answers she is told whether she is fertile or infertile.

If the woman has not yet reached the fertile mucus stage she is told to be careful and to watch out for the feeling of wetness.

She is warned that she should avoid sex relations on

1. any day of wetness—even a patch of wetness
2. a cloudy mucus day
3. a day of thin, watery, colorless or cloudy, slippery mucus.

The woman is told that she will be visited again around the date of next menstruation.

CHAPTER 9

Follow-up and Going Beyond Fertility Awareness

MONTH IV

TIME OF VISIT	Around the expected date of menstruation (2 weeks after Visit 3 of teaching month 3).
AIMS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To recall the number of days of fertility based on changes in the mucus quality.2. To find out if the woman/couple is facing any problem in using the method.3. To repeat how to use the method.4. To offer support.

Lead Questions to ask

Did you notice the feeling of wetness after the last visit?

How many days of wetness did you have?

Did you notice the thin, watery, colorless or cloudy and slippery mucus?

Did you have wetness at that time?

For how many days did you have this mucus?

Did you avoid sex relations on the day of wetness with thin, colorless, cloudy, watery and slippery mucus and for 2 days and nights after that?

Did you notice wetness again after these days?

Have you started menstruating?

Did you notice wetness just before menstruation?

What type of mucus did you have when you noticed this wetness?

The woman is told that she will be visited every month or every 3 months.

Repeat

LEARNING MONTH III

The woman is asked to continue checking for infertility by the feeling of no wetness at the vulva.

She is told to continue

To avoid sex on

1. A day with a feeling of wetness (even once during the day)

or

cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery, colorless or cloudy
and slippery mucus.

and

2 more days and nights

2. A day she forgets to check for the feeling of
no wetness and wetness at the vulva.

3. A day she is not sure if she is infertile or
fertile.

If there is fever or severe stress, she must expect a delay in feeling and seeing the fertile mucus

or

there can be patches of fertile days i.e. a few days of wetness and then infertile days and again fertile days.

The woman should strictly follow the rules of avoiding sex on any day of wetness (even once during the day)

or

any cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery, colorless and cloudy and slippery mucus.

This will take care of problems.

Going beyond Fertility Awareness and Natural Family Planning

Mobilising Women

The ideal is to organise group meetings for further support.

Fertility awareness education and its use is to assist women to improve their health and for their development.

It is an entry point to women's health and development and mobilising women.

The visits after month III are to offer the woman support.

The ideal is to organise group meetings in the village for the users to come together and share their experiences.

The animator/instructor will have a rapport with the women which will develop after 3 months of regular house-visiting and communication

The formation of small groups of users will ensure and foster a community spirit among the women.

It will ensure that the support for the woman comes from the other women and from within the community (collective support).

It will increase the concern for other women

It will be a platform for women to be able to share and identify common problems and to look jointly for solutions especially in matters concerning health and their status and development.

Women not using the method should also be encouraged to join the group.

As a group there will be a greater community participation and involvement and partnership, other than a continuing dialogue between women of different creeds and castes.

The group will participate to identify and decide in the necessary continuity to reach other women in their village and in the surrounding cluster of villages.

This shared responsibility reduces the role of the animator/facilitator.

The animator/facilitator should ensure that there are women leaders to continue organising meetings and action.

PART III

Natural Family Planning After Child-Birth

Learning Infertility Awareness During Breast-Feeding

INTRODUCTION

In a village a large number of women will be breast-feeding and not menstruating.

There are taboos to having sex in the early period after child birth, but at this time the women are infertile.

When women resume sex relations, they use no method of family planning and are at a risk of getting pregnant when they are fertile.

Women getting pregnant after a child-birth during breast-feeding without menstruating is common.

Fertility awareness education and its use, will enable a woman to find out when she is

infertile to have sex.

The fertile days will come early for women who are not breast feeding every 2 to 2½ hours.

If the baby sleeps at night without suckling at the breast,

If the baby has top feeds,

If the breast milk produced is less.

The learning of fertility awareness and natural family planning has been phased to help learning into

LEARNING PHASE I, II & III.

Each phase lasts 2 weeks.

Phase I is to learn

1. the signs of infertile days.
2. to find out the difference between seminal fluid (overflow) and mucus.

Phase II is to learn to

1. use the infertile mucus days
2. to find out the difference between seminal fluid and fertile mucus.

Phase III is to learn to use the actual method which allows sex on all infertile days.

Breast-feeding women too, require repeated teaching.

They need support to learn and use the method.

There is a greater need for support.

1. because of uncooperative husbands
2. the myth that breast feeding women cannot get pregnant for 6 months to 1 or 2 years (based on old wives tales or experience of earlier child birth)

In Phase I the woman has to avoid sex on infertile mucus days.

There will be a problem if the woman has no dry days. Therefore she needs close support through regular frequent visits at this stage.

To give the woman support a system of house-visits was designed.

Each visit has an aim.

The Introductory Visit is at any time of the cycle, as for normal women pages 84 to 86

If the woman is not menstruating and is breast feeding she is taught Learning Phase I for breast feeding women.

Learning Phase I — 2 weeks to learn infertility signs

Visit 1 — This visit is a continuation of the introductory visit and to teach learning Phase I for breastfeeding non-menstruating women.

Visit 2 — 1 week later
to assist the woman identify infertility
to support the woman.

Learning Phase II — 2 weeks to learn use of infertile mucus days.

Visit 1 — 1 week after Visit II of Learning Phase I.
to teach use of the method according to learning
Phase II for breast feeding, non menstruating women.

Visit 2 — 1 week later
to support the woman.

Learning Phase III — 2 weeks to learn to use all infertile days.

Visit 1 — 1 week after visit II of Learning phase II.

To teach use of the method-Learning Phase III for breast-feeding, non menstruating women, etc.

Visit 2 — 1 week later
to support the women.

After this the visits are reduced to every 2 weeks to gradually reduce the support.

Visit 3 — 2 weeks later.
to support the woman

Visit 4 — 2 weeks later.
to support the woman

After this the woman is visited every 2-4 weeks. The visits at first will be in the home of the woman.

Later if possible she attends a group meeting for follow-up and support.

Then further learning and support will be from the other women users within the community.

CHAPTER 1

Learning Phase I

1. The woman checks at least 3 times a day

- in the morning
- at midday
- in the evening

for

- the feeling of no wetness and wetness at the vulva

and

the type of mucus

i.e. thick, whitish or yellowish

or

curdy

or

milky*

or

cloudy

or

thin, watery, colorless

and

slippery mucus.

2. If there is no wet feeling or mucus the woman is safe to have sex at night

*Some breastfeeding women notice a continuous milky mucus).

3. After sex at night, the next day

- A. in the morning the woman has to wash and wipe
or only wipe the vulva.
- B. at midday and in the evening
the woman has to check for the feeling and the mucus
- C. She should avoid sex on that day and night.

**4. If the next day, the woman has no wetfeeling or mucus
she can have sex relations at night.**

The next day after sex at night:

- A. in the morning the woman should wash and wipe
or only wash the vulva.
- B. at midday and in the evening, check for the feeling
and the mucus.
- C. She should avoid sex that day and night.

5. The day the woman notices mucus—any mucus

A. she has to avoid sex relations

B. She has to see what it looks like,

and

what it feels like.

If there is no wet feeling

and the mucus is thick, whitish or yellowish or curdy

It is infertile,

6. If the next day

is a day of

no wet feeling at the vulva

and

no mucus at the vulva

The woman can have sex that night.

The rule of next day after sex at night has to be followed.

Rule of next day after sex at night.

- A. in the morning wash and wipe or only wipe the vulva.**
- B. at midday and in the evening check for the feeling and the mucus.**
- C. Avoid sex that day and night.**

7. If there is a wet feeling at the vulva
(even once during the day)

and

milky mucus

or

thick mucus

or

cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery, colorless or cloudy

the woman has to avoid sex for that day and night and for 2 more days and nights, as it may be **fertile mucus**.

Note:

In Phase I the woman can have sex only on

days of no wet feeling

and

no mucus

The next day after sex is a day of no sex.

She has to avoid sex on all mucus days-infertile and fertile.

CHAPTER 2

Learning Phase II

1. The woman checks at least 3 times a day

in the morning

in the afternoon

in the evening

for

the feeling of no wetness and wetness
and the mucus.

2. If the woman has

no wet feeling at the vulva

and

no mucus at the vulva

that night is safe for sex

3. If the woman has

no wet feeling at the vulva

and

thick, whitish or yellowish

or

curdy mucus

or

milky mucus

that night is safe for sex.

4. After sex at night the next day

- A. in the morning the vulva is washed and wiped or only wiped
- B. at midday and in the evening the woman has to check for the feeling and the mucus at the vulva
- C. The woman has to avoid sex that day and night.

D. If at midday or in the evening

there is a wet feeling

with

cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery, colorless

and

slippery mucus

this may be due to fertile mucus.

Therefore the woman should avoid sex on that day and night.

E. If the wetness is obvious and the discharge profuse

The woman should avoid sex on that day and night and for 2 more days and nights.

5. On a day with

a feeling of wetness at the vulva (even once during the day)

or

cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery, colorless

and

slippery mucus

the woman should avoid sex relations on that night and for 2 more days and nights.

Note :

In Phase II, the woman can have sex on days of

no wet feeling

and

no mucus

and

thick mucus days

But the next day after sex

is a day of no sex.

CHAPTER 3

Learning Phase III

1. The woman **checks** at the vulva at least 3 times a day
in the morning
at midday
in the evening
for
the feeling of no wetness
and wetness
the type of mucus (if possible).

Note:

If there is no toilet facility or privacy the woman checks
only the feeling of no wetness and wetness

2. On a safe day i.e. **infertile day**, a woman can have sex
relations at night.
i.e. a day of
no wet feeling
with
no mucus
or
thick, whitish, yellowish
or
curdy mucus
or
milky mucus.

3. After sex at night (on an infertile day) the next day

- A. in the morning the woman washes and wipes or wipes the vulva.
- B. at midday and in the evening she checks for the feeling of no wetness and wetness (and the type of mucus if possible).
- C. If there is no wet feeling at midday and in the evening (and no mucus or thick mucus) the woman can have sex at night.
- D. If there is a wet feeling even once during the day no sex that day and night.

E. If there is a profuse wetness

and
cloudy mucus
or
thin, watery, colorless
and

slippery mucus

**Sex should be avoided that day and night and for
2 more days and nights.**

4. On any day of feeling of wetness (even once during the day)

and

cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery, colorless or cloudy

and

slippery mucus

Sex should be avoided on that day and night

and

2 more days and night.

(This can be a day of fertile mucus).

Warning:

To avoid sex on

- 1) a day the woman has forgotten to check.
- 2) if the woman is not sure she is infertile or fertile
- 3) any day of wet feeling even once during the day.
- 4) any day of cloudy mucus (if checking for mucus is possible)
- 5) any day of thin, watery, colorless, cloudy and slippery mucus.

CHAPTER 4

Teaching Phase I

HOUSE VISITS 1, 2.

HOUSE VISIT 1

During the introductory visit if the woman is breast feeding and has not started menstruating she is taught

Learning Phase 1

according to Part III Chapter I—pages 119 to 122

i.e. Visit 1 of Teaching Phase 1 is part of the
introductory visit.

Warning :

If the woman has delivered

3 or more months before the introductory visit

and

is not completely breast-feeding

she may be pregnant already.

The woman should be told about the possibility of her being
already pregnant.

If the woman has delivered

3 or less months before the introductory visit

and

is completely breast feeding

there is no possibility of a pregnancy.

The woman is told that she will be visited again a week later.

Teaching Phase I

HOUSE VISIT 2

TIME OF VISIT	1 week after the introductory visit.
AIM OF VISIT	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To repeat the teaching.2. To remind the woman to check for the feeling and mucus3. To offer support.

Lead questions to ask

What are you feeling now ?

What did you feel this morning ?

Did you have mucus ?

What was it like ?

What did you feel yesterday ?

Did you have mucus ?

What was it like ?

When did you have sex ?

Did you notice the seminal overflow the next morning ?

Did you wash and wipe the vulva the next morning ?

Did you check at midday and in the evening ?

What did you feel and see ?

Was your husband cooperative ?

**According to the woman's answers explain to her—
signs of infertility.**

If the woman has days of no wet feeling and no mucus she
should continue to avoid sex on mucus days.

Note

If the woman has had no day of

no mucus

but has thick mucus

or milky mucus

with no wet feeling

she can be advised

to use a day of no wet feeling

with

thick, whitish or yellowish

or curdy mucus

or

milky mucus.

After sex at night the next day

- A. in the morning she should wash and wipe
or only wipe the vulva.
- B. at midday and in the evening she should check
for the feeling at the vulva and if possible
the mucus.
- C. Avoid sex on that day and night.

If the woman has a continuous wet feeling with a milky discharge
it will be difficult to teach her. This is rare.

The woman is told that she will be visited again 1 week later
to teach Learning Phase II.

CHAPTER 5

Teaching Phase 2

HOUSE VISITS 1, 2

VISIT 1.

TIME OF VISIT	1 week after visit 1 of Teaching Phase 1.
AIM OF VISIT	1. To explain to the woman her signs of infertility.
	2. To teach Learning Phase II
	3. To support the woman.

Lead questions to ask

What are you feeling now?
What did you feel this morning ?
Did you have mucus this morning?
What was it like ?
What did you feel yesterday?
Did you have mucus?
What was it like?
When did you have sex?
Did you notice the seminal overflow the next morning?
Did you wash and wipe the vulva the next morning?
Did you check at midday and in the evening for the feeling?
What did you feel?
Was your husband cooperative?

According to the woman's answers explain to her what she has felt and seen.

Teach

LEARNING PHASE II

according to Part III Chapter II pages 123 to 125

The woman is told that she will be visited again 1 week later.

Teaching Phase 2

HOUSE VISIT 2

TIME OF VISIT 1 week after Visit 1 of Teaching Phase 2.

- AIM
- 1 To explain to the woman her signs of in fertility.
 - 2 To remind the woman to check.
 - 3 To repeat learning Phase II.
 - 4 To offer support.

Lead questions to ask

What are you feeling now?
What did you feel this morning?
Did you have mucus this morning?
What was it like?
What did you feel yesterday?
Did you have mucus?
What was it like?
Did you have sex on a day of no wet feeling with thick, whitish
or yellowish curdy mucus?
Did you notice the seminal overflow the next morning?
Did you wash and wipe the vulva the next morning?
Did you check at midday and in the evening for the feeling?
What did you feel?
Did you avoid sex that night?

According to the woman's answers explain to her what she has felt and seen.

Repeat

LEARNING PHASE II

According to Part III Chapter II pages 123 to 125

The woman is told that she will be visited 1 week later
to teach Learning Phase III—the actual method,

CHAPTER 6

Teaching Phase 3

HOUSE VISITS 1, 2, 3, 4

HOUSE VISIT 1

TIME OF VISIT 1 week after visit II of teaching Phase II.

- AIM
1. To recall the woman's signs of infertility.
 2. To teach training Phase III i.e. use of the modified mucus method.
 3. To offer support.

Lead questions to ask

What are you feeling now ?

What did you feel this morning ?

Did you have mucus this morning ?

What was it like ?

What did you feel yesterday ?

Did you have mucus ?

What was it like ?

Did you have sex on a day of no wet feeling with thick, whitish or yellowish and curdy mucus ?

Did you notice the seminal overflow the next morning?

Did you wash and wipe the vulva the next morning ?

Did you check at midday and in the evening for the feeling ?

What did you feel ?

Did you avoid sex that night ?

According to the woman's answers explain to her what she has felt and seen

The woman should be encouraged to explain what signs are infertile.

Teach

LEARNING PHASE III

according to Part III Chapter 3 pages 126 to 128

The woman is told that from this week she can use all infertile days, including the day after sex.

Warning:

To avoid sex

- 1) on a day the woman forgets to check
- 2) on a day she is not sure if she is not wet or wet
- 3) on a day with a patch of wetness
- 4) on days of wetness
or
cloudy mucus
or
thin, watery, colorless or cloudy
and
slippery mucus
and 2 days and nights after the wetness or thin mucus
stop.

The woman is told that she will be visited again 1 week later.

Teaching Phase 3

HOUSE VISIT 2.

TIME OF VISIT	1 week after visit I of Teaching Phase II
AIMS	: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To repeat the teaching of learning phase III.2. To remind the woman to check for infertility.3. To offer support.

Lead questions to ask

What are you feeling now ?
What did you feel this morning ?
Did you have mucus this morning ?
What was it like?
What did you feel yesterday?
Did you have mucus ?
What was it like ?
Did you have sex on a day of no wet feeling with thick
whitish or yellowish or curdy mucus ?
Did you notice the seminal overflow the next morning ?
Did you wash and wipe the vulva the next morning ?
Did you check at midday and in the evening for the feeling ?
What did you feel ?
Did you have sex that night ?

According to the woman's answers
let her identify her signs of infertility.

Repeat

LEARNING PHASE III

according to Part III Chapter 3 pages 126 to 128

The woman is told that she can use all the infertile days
including the day after sex at night if it is a day of no
wet feeling.

Warning:

To avoid sex on

- 1) a day the woman forgets to check
- 2) a day she is not sure if she is not wet or wet
- 3) a day she has a wet feeling even once.
- 4) days with a wet feeling

or

cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery or cloudy

and

slippery mucus

and 2 more days and nights,

The woman is told that she will be visited again 2 weeks later.

The gap of 2 weeks is to reduce support.

Teaching Phase 3

HOUSE VISIT 3

TIME OF VISIT

2 weeks after Visit II of teaching Phase3 .

AIM

1. To offer support
2. To find out if the woman is continuing use

The lead questions are repeated as in Teaching Phase III visit II.

The woman herself should explain her signs of infertility.

If she has felt or seen fertility she will describe this.

The warning when to avoid sex is repeated.

The woman is told that she will be visited again 2 week later.

Teaching Phase 3

HOUSE VISIT 4

TIME OF VISIT 2 weeks after Visit III.

AIM To offer support.

The lead questions are repeated as in Teaching Phase III visit 2.

The woman is asked to describe her signs of infertility and fertility (if she has experienced fertility).

The woman is told that when the female bud and egg ripen she will notice

a wet feeling at the vulva

or

cloudy mucus

or

thin, watery, colorless or cloudy

and

slippery mucus.

2 weeks after that she will start menstruation.

After menstruation she will have infertile days when she cannot get pregnant and then fertile days and 2 weeks later she will menstruate.

The warning when to avoid sex is repeated.

The woman is told that she will be visited again 4 weeks later.

CHAPTER 6

Going beyond NFP

After visit 4 of Teaching Phase 3 the woman is visited every month.

till a group is formed.

Later the follow-up is through the group meetings.

The other women in the community who are menstruating and have experienced fertility can assist in further support and teaching.

After a group is formed the village woman leader acts as animator to look at women's health issues, participatory education and development and for collective action.

